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# Memoirs of
# Ernest II, Duke of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha

DUKE ERNEST II.

IN HIS FORTIETH YEAR.

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WORCESTER COLLEGE
OXFORD.

# MEMOIRS OF ERNEST II

## Duke of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha

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EMBRACING PERIOD

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PREVIOUS to the year 1848 wonderfully little interest was felt in the Middle and South German States in the fight which had now been going on for centuries in the Northern Marches of the Empire between the Germans and the Danes, and which had been continued with renewed strength during the last few decennaries. A closer knowledge of the questions, regarding the strife between the Duchies of Holstein and Schleswig on the one hand and the Kingdom of Denmark on the other, was almost entirely wanting, even amongst the politically educated classes. People had but a very misty idea of the

fact that since the entrance into power of Christian VIII, violent agitations had arisen in the German Duchies, and that the grants of this King had given rise to politically scientific and juridical reflections and discussions, which the German Confederate Diet was finally unable to pass over unnoticed any longer.

That in Schleswig a fraction of the Danish people, incited thereto from Copenhagen, had risen up against the German element, that in Denmark there was a powerful agitation for the incorporation of the Duchy of Schleswig with the Danish States, that in Holstein, on the other hand, the indivisibility of the two Duchies was obstinately defended, all these circumstances at that time hardly furnished any idea of the important effect which the Danish hereditary succession and the rights of Schleswig-Holstein were soon to produce on all Germany, in fact, on the German national consciousness.

Only a very few newspapers often furnished intelligence, before the year 1848, concerning the fact that a struggle was imminent in the far North, in which the question of nationality would play a part. The *Augsburg Universal Newspaper* had won real merit by furnishing well-informed articles concerning the state of the Duchies since 1844, and attempted to awaken popular interest in the complicated affair.

A number of German men fought and suffered under Danish despotism, and had to atone for every free word, written or spoken, which was sufficient, in the existing state of the feelings in South and Middle Germany, to win friends for the Duchies. But side by side with this exterior, which was a recommendation for the liberalism of the times, a dynastic kernel showed itself in the question, the full understanding of which, one may say, it was very generally difficult to impart to the German nation of the nineteenth century in 1848 as well as twenty-five years later.

This is only the real state of things as they then were, and I by no means intend the acknowledgment of this fact as a depreciation of the lawful hereditary succession question, which was then paramount in Denmark and the Duchies, and which would beyond all doubt soon have to be settled.

A dispute about hereditary succession, perhaps a war, ranked as far as State interests of the last century were concerned amongst the favourite themes in politics; but in our days there was rather a feeling of repugnance for these things; and the revolutionary spirit of the century appeared inclined, going to the opposite extreme, to hit upon a solution which, in consequence of such dynastic questions, concerned the nations but little. I therefore think that it is of greater importance for the judgment of the origin, as well as the progress of the Schleswig-Holstein question, to recall how very little popular the form was in which it first became known. During half my life I have been so often and variously involved in these matters, that, according to my recollections, I must emphasise the difficulties which have at all times moved me to attempt to awaken interest, both in and out of Germany, in a national question which had entered into existence in a not too tempting form. English and Frenchmen had complained innumerable times of the impossibility of grasping this complicated deduction of rights on which the Germans founded their claims against Denmark. People entrenched themselves everywhere behind the assertion that one could not really understand the Schleswig-Holstein question and in Germany also, the circumstantiality of these legal discussions could not but put a check on the enthusiasm awakened for the German cause.

The discord in the House of Oldenburg itself, and the stubborn nature of the individual branches of this large family, the passions which raged between them, and the difficulty of finding an acceptable equalisation between the political and dynastic interests lent something painful to the suit relating to the public law, although it was conducted with the greatest learning and, on the part of the Holsteiners, the most honourable weapons of jurisprudence. In nearly connected and friendly Houses also there was a feeling of embarrassment concerning the matter, the solution of which could not rightly be foreseen, as the existence of the state of Denmark, as it had now stood for centuries, had set up the strongest opposition to the claims of the reigning families.

For the extinction of the male issue of the principal Danish line after the probably childless death of Christian VIII, and that of the hereditary Prince Frederick VII, made known the probability that the Danish State would separate into two parts, whether it was that in Denmark the female succession was to be given the preference, according to the well-known royal law, or that the agnatic line of the House would be able to obtain recognition from the nation and the foreign Powers of their contested claims to the different parts of the Danish Monarchy.

Such a breaking up of the different portions of Denmark, which had been under one rule for centuries past, was in opposition—it cannot be denied,—to the simplest and most elementary principles of the politics of modern Europe; and the mode of viewing things was really like that of the Middle Ages, if one were to treat the maintenance or the formation of this State solely from the point of view of the dynastic relations. Natural duty and feeling imposed upon the King of Denmark the task of preserving the Danish State as it now existed internationally, of working, whilst the individual portions of the country, joining together, only opposed this Danish undertaking all the more. Christian VIII had a conception that in this respect something must be done, but he was wanting in the ability to find a clearly marked out firm position for the question. His art of governing was exhausted in expedients and the irresolute wavering of the different parties.

Whilst national and constitutional ideas were gaining ground more and more on every side, and the fourth decennary was repressing radicalism amongst both Danes and Germans, the Danish Kingdom, with its claims and wishes to save the monarchy as such from the last offshoots of the Danish branch, stood alone, almost without the support of any legal and conservative body at all, and almost without any co-operation from the councillors of the Crown, who were far more inclined, by the division of government in the highest chanceries, to look forward to the future separation of the lands belonging to the Danish Crown.

The helpless and irresolute condition of the last two Kings had, at an early date, accustomed both Denmark and Holstein to look towards foreign Powers. The internal strife was increased by the consciousness and knowledge that the fate of Powers of second and third rank certainly lay more in the hand of the European areopagus than in the strength of their own decisions. Thus arose fear of, desire for, and suspicion of, foreign conspiracies.

Her connection with Russia, the Scandinavian North, envious England, Prussia, who wanted coasts, and the old French allies of the Danish State, might all at any moment disturb the circle of home politics, and the confident belief in secret machinations and artifices was perhaps in no political question so customary as in the Danish-Holstein affair.

When it became my fate to approach nearer to all this, and to become acquainted with almost all the most prominent persons in the Holstein agitation, the opposition had reached its greatest height, and no judicious man could any longer doubt that there could be no talk of a permanent understanding, in the sense of the maintenance of Danish integrity.

Between the two nations, particularly at the spots where they lived close together, such as in the North of Schleswig, a deadly enmity had developed, which was no longer to be appeased, although neither in Holstein nor in Schleswig could one find any particular inclination on the part of the German population for the political comprehension of Germany. Even during the years of war—1848-50,—I could not but feel great doubts, when I had had a close view of things, whether one ought really to describe the agitation as essentially national-German, as was preferably understood throughout the remainder of Germany; and if many German Princes were more reserved with their zeal and help for the Schleswig-Holstein cause, because they were filled with excessive shrinking from the revolutionary feeling supposed to be predominant in the Duchies, they were labouring under a great mistake.

Far be it from me to go deeply into the origin of the

national and wordy war which had arisen in Schleswig. That the initiation and the priority were to be ascribed to the Danes, must be admitted by all unprejudiced historical documents, let them regard it as a merit or a crime, whichever it may be. At the beginning of the century there was not yet a single trace of national hate amongst the masses of the people, and even during the years of the Revolution it remained almost unknown amongst the higher classes. Thus it happened, that at every fresh outburst of enmity between the races, the parties never wearied of exonerating themselves from the reproach of having taken the initiative in the strife, as being a stain on their rectitude. Nevertheless, there can exist not the slightest doubt, that the efforts of the Copenhagen Liberal and Radical parties had actually thriven greatly, when the political idea of the union of Schleswig with Denmark, by means of an act of violence on the part of Christian VIII and Frederick VII, began to assume form.

Since the year 1840, Christian VIII had with great energy pursued the old Danish idea of bringing the German Duchies into a dynastically insured union with the kingdom; but he was not the man to carry a great plan into execution. His whole nature was too much opposed to lasting activity in order to gain an end for him to be capable of sweeping aside the many hindrances which beset him on every side. His connections of Augustenburg were therefore hopeful for many years that the King would never decide to resort to extremities.

Christian VIII was a man of pleasure, and apparently good-natured; he continued to keep up friendly relations with the Duke of Augustenburg, and nothing hinted that he was desirous of diminishing the latter's rights.

Meanwhile Schleswig-Holstein was to be powerfully awakened from her confidence in 1846, by the Open Letter. It ended a system of deception which had been going on for years against the rights of the country. Even the German Confederate Diet was aroused from its torpor by this act of royal arbitrariness, and defended the rights of the Duchies against the Danish intentions to annex.

It may be considered a lucky circumstance for the development of Schleswig-Holstein that, even before the storms of the year 1848, the question of the lawful position of the Duchies had been declared a matter for the Confederacy; for without this decision there would afterwards have been much less inclination amongst the governing circles of Germany, to provide support in this matter, which smacked so conspicuously of the hated revolution.

At the time when Christian VIII issued the public letter, Prince Frederick von Noer was Stadtholder and Commanding General of the Duchies, and it caused him to retire from his influential and distinguished position. The Duke of Augustenburg, also, as Head of the House, at once raised a protest against the step undertaken by the Danish Government.

But these very facts caused the dynastic side of the whole affair to recede so completely into the background, that all the hard events of the year 1848 were needed as a reminder that national interests lay hidden behind the strife between the different branches of the House of Oldenburg. The particular feature of this situation lay in the circumstance that neither the one nor the other of the parties engaged in the struggle would have anything to do with national matters. One must rather remember here that it caused both of them the greatest vexation when the Danish and German efforts were attempted to be connected, first with regard to language and literature, but soon with all the national passion, with the distinguished names of the royal and Augustenburg family.

Christian VIII again and again hindered any community with the Eider Danes, with the Freedom of the Press Club, with the members of the Casino, and the Augustenburgers were equally little inclined to have anything to do with the national excitement, which, in their opinion, had been most unnecessarily raised in the Duchies. Although the tactics of both the Danish parties were to reproach one another for their doubtful community with the national radicalism, yet there is no reason for distrusting the manifold written and

spoken declarations of Christian VIII, according to which he kept aloof at all times from any tendency to add to the Danish Kingdom. In the same, amongst the Augustenburgers, Prince von Noer, even many years later, when he published his notes on 1848 and 1849, thought it right formally to prove his cosmopolitan way of thinking by his education and development, and expressly to protest against the supposition that his attitude during those years had been influenced by any national feeling whatever.

And, indeed, it must have been in consequence of this very sober way of thinking that what is generally understood by popularity, in the sense of enthusiasm amongst the educated classes, or the middle classes, for the holders of modern ideas, was in no way conferred upon the Augustenburgers.

When I became familiar with the affairs of Schleswig-Holstein, I could not but have been greatly disappointed if I had thought to find a feeling there such as history sometimes tells us was entertained by the faithful followers of Princes and the knightly champions of the injured rights of persecuted Pretenders. Nothing of the kind was to be observed after 1848, and certainly not before then, in Schleswig-Holstein. What bound earnest and patriotic politicians to the interests of the Augustenburg family had remained a simple question of rights, which, nevertheless, could work but little on the hearts of men in the way of personal feeling and devotion.

Added to this was the fact that the case of the breach of rights on the part of the Danish plenipotentiary, when the agitation of the year 1848 began, had not really occurred, but that complaints might everywhere be made that such a step had been begun. The evident point of strife was first shown to be the constitutional position of Schleswig, which was again in a bad state, as Schleswig did not belong to the German Confederacy, whilst the Duchy of Holstein appeared too weak itself to keep its hold on the intimately united and, in fact, inseparable land.

The attack of the Danes was therefore first aimed (as

was usual with their only too conscientious policy), at the constitutional right alone, and the Augustenburg hereditary succession question remained untouched in the matter; there even appeared a possibility that the family quarrel might be settled by a union, after which the whole Danish monarchy might at some future date assail the house of Augustenburg.

Although every aspiration of the kind was officially and publicly foiled by the reigning Duke of Augustenburg, yet, for the sake of the historical comprehension of the matter, one must remember that a possibility of this kind did exist, and that it was frequently discussed before and after the year 1848 in proper circles. One would perhaps have most liked to see in this solution of things the wishes of those Great Powers, who desired to have the existing state of the Danish monarchy assured for all times, satisfied; but as the protection of the constitutional right of Schleswig-Holstein at the same time afforded a certain prospect of the separation of the different parts of Denmark, and this was the sole means of saving a considerable portion of the German nation from destruction and Danish despotism, one might have expected that at least the German Powers would come forward unanimously and energetically for the rights of the Augustenburgers. Led by this thought King Frederick William IV wrote the well-known letter to the Duke of Augustenburg in January 1848, in which he promised to protect the latter's claims, which, nevertheless, appeared but little in accord with the policy which Prussia immediately afterwards carried out.

The agitation of the year 1848 had had a more independent issuing point than that of the Parisian events of February, in Denmark and the Duchies of Schleswig-Holstein, than in most other countries. With the ascension of the throne by Frederick VII in January a constitutional struggle at once began between Holstein and Denmark, which led to the war. The new King at once adopted seriously the United States' Constitution prepared by Christian VIII, and by the patent of the 28th of January, arranged the union of the Parliaments of all the different portions of the Danish monarchy.

If Christian VIII had sometimes felt doubtful about the legality of his purpose, Frederick VII was just sufficiently determined in order to set aside all consideration for his relations and subjects. A person like this King reminded one of the unhappy times of the monarchy in Europe.

The health of Frederick VII hardly placed him in a position, whether in a moral or a physical respect, to display the energy which would have been necessary in the difficulties under which Denmark was then labouring. During temporary fits of complete apathy, he would often remind those who surrounded him of the peculiarities of southern characters from the Cinque cento. He loved to tell them of the most unusual things, and they were forced to behave as if they literally believed everything that the King said. He told of battles which had never taken place, but in which he had fought. His adventures were sometimes the experiences of John Falstaff, sometimes imitations of the fabulously celebrated campaigns of Alexander the Great in India. Added to this, there was a dark shade of doubt in the minds of men as to the King's extraction, which made it much easier for the radicalism of the time to bring the suspicious ruler entirely under the yoke of Danish chauvinism.

In spite of the King's readiness to tyrannise over the Germans in every way, Frederick VII did not satisfy the Danes with the patent of the 28th of January. The latter demanded with ever increasing urgency the complete incorporation of Schleswig, whilst the Parliament of Holstein wished to see the constitutional question solved only by means of the closer annexation of the old fraternal race in an undivided whole. Of all these party inclinations not one could really be pointed out as truly conservative.

The old law, with its particular legislature, with its odd parliamentary representation, did not, if one must tell the truth, satisfy anyone, and no one would support it. The methods of establishing a modern state and modern institutions were very different, and were partially defended by all parts of the country. The royal power—and it can hardly be reproached for this—sought to bring about the unity of

the whole monarchy, which was equally opposed by both Danes and Germans. The Germans laid all the blame of the war which broke out between the advocates of Danish interests in Schleswig on those who fought for liberal unity in clubs and newspapers. In this they were undoubtedly right. But that the aim of the union of the German Duchies was only to be attained through the complete separation of Schleswig from Holstein was a fact which everyone everywhere honestly and openly shrank from admitting.*

The Germans in Holstein rather determined to make the demand very timidly that Schleswig should enter the German Confederacy, for this idea was only to be carried out by a complete change in the state of the public law. That the proper persons amongst the Holstein patriots neglected to fix their eyes sharply and plainly, and without diplomatic subtlety, on the goal of the independence of the Duchies, and to point out that the war for it was declared only as national, and for the sake of freedom, found disapprobation amongst a portion of the Holsteiners, and did not fail to elicit loud utterances from literary circles, which threw the Powers of Germany into anxiety and horror by their more radical programme. The historical works, which were brought out in large numbers during this time, have been for the most part forgotten, but we can see in an otherwise worthless book, by Otto Fock, what the sentiments and efforts were which ruled the so-called Schleswig-Holstein progressive party. His description may at least spare the reader the search in the newspapers and pamphlets which were afterwards so happily used by the reactionists, for the purpose of representing the Schleswig-Holstein agitation as a matter of radicalism to the timid minds of many statesmen,

The diplomacy of Schleswig-Holstein tried in vain to quiet the minds of those in the highest circles, by furnishing any amount of explanations and references for the legal conduct of the proper leaders of the agitation. I need

* The cause and meaning of the war between Germany and Denmark. Schleswig 1849. And whose fault was the war between Denmark and Germany? Hamburg, Perthes 1849. In the latter document the origin of the war is best described.

hardly say that, for my part, I expected the German Confederacy to take any decisive step with regard to this matter: yet, at the time of my stay in Berlin at the end of January, 1848, a certain protesting attitude had been adopted there towards Schleswig-Holstein and the House of Augustenburg.

Immediately upon this, others were able to obtain a certain amount of recognition for the constitutional projects of King Frederick VII, of the 28th January. Frederick William IV perceived something of his own spirit in the intended union of the Parliaments, and it is said that he was pleased to see Frederick VII deviate from the modern constitutional line, that he had the intention of proposing something very similar to the united Diet in Prussia, that he desired to surround himself entirely by proxies, who would first try the constitutional project. It might, indeed, appear as if the Parliamentary Committees, and their meetings which depended only upon the spontaneous word of the King, the envoys to the united Diet, and all those attempts which the Prussian King had really regarded as his own political mental blossoms, would now have to be, in some degree, imitated in Denmark.

These hopes alone were not to be entertained for any length of time, and one cannot but consider it as one of the luckiest circumstances that they were first dispelled by the Danes themselves, and the Radicals who had succeeded in placing themselves at the wheel of State. In that, most of those belonging to German government circles, regarded Monrad, Orla-Lehmann and Hvidt as worse and more dangerous partisans than the Princes of Augustenburg, the Reventlows, and even Beseler and Olshausen, was very natural.

In consequence of this, the Holstein Government was soon able to establish credentials and a certain official connection with the German rulers. People were greatly inclined to consider this as a sign of the recognition of the just cause on the part of Prussia and the German Powers, but they felt them-

selves doomed to even a worse disappointment when these relations altered and were explained.

Before I individually describe these more intimate and important relations of the Schleswig-Holstein cause to the Greater Powers, I will recall in a few words, the well-known event which led to the formation of a Provisory Government in Holstein. I have nothing very special to say concerning the outward course of things, which has often enough been related, but I afterwards entered into close relations with so many of the persons who took part in it, that I feel myself bound, as it were, plainly to assert, in opposition to the Danish accusations, that the men who joined together on the 23rd of March, in order to assume the government, behaved in the most *bona fide* manner towards their King-Duke Frederick VII. Two things were indicated to me by members of the most private circle of the Provisory Government, as representative of the events of the 23rd and 24th of March in Kiel and Rendsburg: the news of the revolution in Copenhagen, which the Government placed in the hands of the Casino, and the non-appearance of the Schleswig-Holstein deputation which had been sent to Copenhagen on the 18th of March, whose return to Kiel on the 23rd had been vainly looked for. For people were convinced, not without reason, that the new Danish Ministry had decided to use force with Schleswig.

This was a case of self-defence. Much as Danish historians have endeavoured to prove that the occurrences in Kiel and the surprise and occupation of the fortress of Rendsburg were revolutionary actions, there can be no doubt either at present or in the future, that the party which had assumed the power at this moment in the Duchies only availed themselves of the rights of resistance, which is as old as the German freedom and consciousness of right which refused blind obedience to breach of constitution and deeds of violence.

On the same 23rd of March on which the Provisory Government of Schleswig-Holstein was constituted, an Assembly met in the Senate-House of Kiel, the majority of

the members of which may have followed much more comprehensive ideas; but the fact remains, that the proclamation of the Provisory Government, which declared the sole aim of its activity to be the simple observation of the state of the law and the independent rights of the royal Ducal power of Frederick VII, was at length approved of on all sides, and that this Provisory Government itself, even against much opposition, obtained recognition.

Prince von Noer, in his notes on the Assembly in the Senate-House of Kiel, had reproached it with having Republican tendencies. On the very same evening of the 23rd of March he declared himself actually and frankly against the men who assumed the name of 'progressive party,' and thus it happened, that in the circles of the German Governments the fear grew greater and greater that, side by side with legitimate demands, the actions of a Radical party in the Duchies might become extremely dangerous to the monarchical condition of Germany.

In Berlin they were particularly ready with complaints of this kind and the Provisory Government had great trouble in freeing itself from the suspicion of a brotherhood with these fatal North Elban elements.

As a fact, there was not much internal harmony to be seen in the heart of the Provisory Government. The men who were called upon to use the power co-operatively, displayed the most extreme opposition of character when together, and a great difference in the political mode of thinking, and it would hardly be too much if one were to say that they continually opposed each other. The Provisory Government at first consisted of Beseler, Reventlow, Prince von Noer, and the lawyer Bremer of Flendsburg, proposed by Beseler, to whom, in the place of Herr Bargum, against whom the party in the Senate-House had unanimously risen during the night session of the 23rd and 24th, the Commander of the Kiel militia, merchant M. T. Schmidt.

If so numerous a Government was only justified by the fact that it was desired that the most different parties in the country should be represented therein, its internal strength was by no means increased thereby. When the parliamentary

deputation, which had been sent to Copenhagen five days previously, returned from their courageously undertaken expedition, it appeared necessary to take the railway director Olshausen also into the Government, as he was at that time undoubtedly considered the most popular man in the country. Beseler undertook to propose and bring about Olshausen's admittance to the Government; but in the high council of the Duchies unappeasable oppositions had in this wise arisen, which Prince von Noer has called by the roughest name in his notes. The personal dislike which existed between the Prince and Olshausen was directed to the questions of the defence of the country and the management of the war, and whereas the former was a deadly enemy to all of the ephemeral military arrangements which the year 1848 brought to the surface with more enthusiasm than understanding, the democratically inclined members of the Government thought that they could get the better of the Danish Power with volunteer corps and a general levy of the people.

Much has been written and many have been the disputes concerning the usefulness and efficiency of the volunteer corps which had assembled in the shortest time in Schleswig-Holstein from all parts of Germany, and it must be a very disheartening task for the special historian of the Schleswig-Holstein agitation to decide of how much or how little value the forces assembled during the first days of April would be to the Duchies.

In my opinion there was then, and is to-day, no doubt, that without the loyal co-operation of the German Confederacy, and, consequently, of the Prussian army, these troops of Schleswig-Holstein would not long have kept the field. The Schleswig-Holstein cause would have been put under still more quickly than the agitation in Germany, as it remains doubtful whether it would have awakened to life again. But the great masses of the Duchies would never believe this bitter truth, and they therefore remained only too greatly inclined to overestimate their own strength, and to undervalue the help of the German States. The view, indeed, which Prince von Noer expressed in his notes,

that the letter of the King of Prussia to the Duke of Augustenburg, if it had arrived at the right time and been made known, would have foiled the violent plans of the Danes, better than all the events of the 24th of March in Holstein, was on no account recognised as being correct.

Frederick William IV would not have allowed a single man to march, had he not desired to make a concession to the German popular feeling for Schleswig-Holstein. Besides, an entirely different point of view than that of German rights helped to bring about the decision to declare war. It was very convenient to him to offer the Prussian army, and especially the Guard's corps some reparation for the unlucky order of the 18th of March. He therefore chose Wrangel as leader of his troops, particularly because the old General declared himself with his usual frankness against all the conflicting parties, and appeared to be the person best fitted to perform the task of keeping peace, and nothing but peace and order in the German Duchies.

In Holstein the so-called army of Schleswig-Holstein had been formed out of the German Confederate contingent; but it had hardly a single officer. The Danes, who had always commanded the contingent, had of course resigned, and the Germans had for a long time scorned to learn the service in Danish military schools. Prince von Noer now stood at the head of these uncertainly-led forces, but his plans of organisation as an educated military man were opposed by the Liberal party, even his own colleagues in the Provisory Government offering him but little support. His faint popularity even amongst the soldiers disappeared, after the lapse of six weeks, and the much thought of volunteer corps regarded him as a still greater opponent than Wrangel.

After the unfortunate meeting near Bau, the Provisory Government at length began to understand that the whole future of the country lay in the hands of the German Powers. The position which the latter assumed with regard to the Schleswig-Holstein question showed itself to be more and more decisive. The newspapers and clubs exhausted themselves in fruitless disputes as to the reason of the defeat;

urged on by representations which continually increased in madness, the democrats demanded great revolutionary steps to be taken, and the North Elban Radicalism began to spread in many towns. The Provisory Government had great trouble to keep within the limits of a statesmanlike leadership of the movement, and it may well be valued as a great piece of good fortune for the Duchies that the Conservative element amongst them was strong enough to bring about regular diplomatic relations with the legitimate Powers of Germany.

Unless the Provisory Government wished to see their cause hopelessly lost, they would in the first place have to win the support of the German Confederacy, and to this effect it was first of all necessary to convince the Governments of the aggressive tendencies of the Danish kingdom. They tried to establish diplomatic connections with all the Foreign Powers, and political agencies were provided in all the larger States.

It was, indeed, not easy to win over men who were fitted to manage the affairs of foreign service with the foreign Governments, but, as must be admitted, more and better things were done than might at all have been expected. The spirit of the year 1848 took particular pleasure in the political metamorphosis of professors and students, and it succeeded so well that the University of Kiel had to be made the principal mustering-place of hastily disguised diplomates of the Schleswig-Holstein Government. The learned gentlemen exchanged their robes for the gold embroidered dress coat, and did not always meet with a perfectly serious reception in their new and uncommon position in Berlin, Frankfort, Hanover, and even at the minor Courts. Whether it had been thought necessary intentionally to choose a licentiate of theology as an agent of the Provisory Government for Mecklenburg, is not known; but as this Herr Fock was at that time one of the most Radical journalists, it was only too easily understood why he did not awaken much enthusiasm for Schleswig-Holstein in the House of Mecklenburg.

On the other hand, the cause of the Duchies was more favourably taken up in Hanover, and the quickness with

which the Confederate troops were set in motion there, had also hastened the decision in Berlin to obtain the mastery in Schleswig-Holstein. That this had occurred with the intention of suppressing the radical and republican elements in the interest of Denmark and of hindering the separation of the Duchies from Denmark, was a conclusion arrived at by many, even before the armistice of Malmöe, but which certainly should be rejected. Respecting the mission of the Prussian Major Wildenbruch the particular assertion was also made, that he had only been sent by King Frederick William IV in order to reassure Denmark concerning the aim of his policy; and, in fact, amongst the Danish diplomatists, the opinion prevailed that Prussia's aim was entirely identical with the interests of Denmark.*

The Provisory Government of the Duchies was represented in Berlin by one of the most esteemed scholars of Germany, Professor Waitz, who had every opportunity of scrutinising the intentions of the Ministry as regarded intervention. According to his communication to the Provisory Government, he had found Heinrich von Arnim very favourably inclined to the Schleswig-Holstein cause, but filled with anxiety lest even greater confusion should arise.

In Berlin they were particularly afraid of an alliance between Denmark and Sweden, and certain amongst the Ministers, such as Camphausen, were altogether opposed to Prussia's affording any support in the Schleswig-Holstein affair. Nevertheless, the Provisory Government could rightly boast of a certain amount of success in the question as to who should occupy the Duchies; for Prussia wanted nothing at first, but to make Holstein the object of the Confederate execution, and was not inclined to go further than Rendsburg. The Schleswig-Holstein proxy considered an occupation of Schleswig as being entirely beyond the intentions of the Prussian Ministry.

Fortunately the Duke of Augustenburg, who was in Berlin, had already energetically expressed himself against

* Documents concerning the latest history of Schleswig-Holstein, 1852, p. 71. Note by Count Knuth, of the 18th of April 1848.

such half measures, and at last the order was, as it were, forced from the King, that Wrangel was to occupy Schleswig.

As for the rest, the Provisory Government assumed the most correct standpoint when, in Berlin as well as at the other European Courts, it declared itself as being the representative of the legitimate King-Duke, and the rights of the Duchies against the Danish Revolutionary Ministry.

A friend furnished me with a summary of the deplomatic work of the Provisory Government during the first months of the agitation, from which it can be seen that the Ministry in Berlin really had agreed to the subtle distinction according to which the Provisory Government worked not by the order, indeed, but in the name of the legitimate monarch. This supposition made it possible to the Prussian Government to recognise that of Schleswig-Holstein.

In Berlin, however, the question of the adoption of Schleswig by the German Confederacy had been very coldly treated from the beginning, they threw the initiative in the matter entirely on the German Diet, but decidedly instructed the Prussian envoys in Frankfort in a manner by no means favourable to this affair. Thus the decisions of the Frankfort German Diet, in spite of the urgent entreaties of the Committee of Fifty, were only half-measures, and the definite adoption of Schleswig into the Confederacy was finally to be reserved for the peace negotiations.

Under these circumstances, England found an opportunity, as early as the month of May, of coming forward with the intention of acting as mediator between the contesting parties.

Already, at that time, Lord Palmerston desired to propose four points for acceptance:—(1) North Schleswig would be transferred to Denmark,—the Duke would enter the Confederacy as the representative of Schleswig. (2) The cessation of hostilities both on land and sea—the surrender of prisoners, hostages, and captured guns. (3) The Duchies would be cleared of the Confederate troops within a certain time. (4) Definite negotiations would take place in London.

It is a remarkable fact that Palmerston always returned

afterwards to the principles of these May proposals, although he was soon obliged to abandon them, and it is pleasant to remember that England's mediating attitude in the Schleswig-Holstein matter dated from the very beginning of the complication. In Germany there was a very general opinion at that time that any energetic step, on the part of the German Confederate Powers, had been prevented by England. There was much less talk of Russia, however, who exercised her influence in Berlin, and yet there can be no doubt that the King of Prussia had made promises in this direction, before he let the troops enter Schleswig, and halt at the boundaries of Jutland.

The Provisory Government had by no means dared to penetrate to the height of the Cabinet of St Petersburg, they had hardly even found an opportunity of sending out feelers thus far. Little that was certain had been learned in Berlin through the so-called *chargés d' affaires*, who had but scanty practice, concerning the relations with Russia, and thus, up to the present day, the influence which was exercised in Berlin from this point, since the beginning of the Schleswig-Holstein agitation, has unfortunately remained an open secret, the details of which, even now, neither can, nor should be, furnished by the Prussian Government.

## CHAPTER II

LORD PALMERSTON'S PROTEST AGAINST PRUSSIAN OCCUPATION OF SCHLESWIG.—PRINCE ALBERT'S COMMENTS.—RUSSIAN PROPOSALS FOR AN ARMISTICE.—INTERVENTION IN BERLIN.—PRUSSIAN MEMORIAL TO LORD PALMERSTON.—NEGOTIATIONS FOR ARMISTICE THROUGH COUNT POURTALES.—DEMANDS OF THE IMPERIAL GOVERNMENT.—DIFFICULT POSITION OF PRUSSIA.—AUERSTADT'S OPINION AS TO ENGLAND.—DOUBTFUL CONDITION OF THE DUCHIES.—PROPOSALS FOR BASIS OF TREATY OF PEACE.—DANISH PRONOUNCED INADMISSIBLE.—INSURRECTION OF NORTH SCHLESWIGERS.—BUNSEN'S PROJECT OF PEACE.—STATEMENT BY SAMWERS.—HIS LETTER OF 23RD FEBRUARY.—CONFERENCE IN LONDON.—THE SITUATION MISUNDERSTOOD AT BERLIN.—SAMWERS ON THE STATE OF THINGS IN LONDON 31ST MARCH 1849.

On the 18th of April Lord Palmerston had had a note handed in at Berlin by Earl Westmoreland, in which a protest was made against the entrance of the Prussian troops into Schleswig, on the ground of the Guarantee Agreement of the 3rd of June 1720, and a demand was eventually made that they should at once be withdrawn. The fact that great sympathy was shown in England for the Danes, was principally the work of the English Ambassador to Copenhagen, Mr Wynne, who was not only thoroughly able to deceive his Ministry, but the leading newspapers as well. With regard to this my brother made the just remark in April:

'The Danish affair is somewhat insidious, and I fear that our good public here, which is not fond of reading and thinking of foreign matters, has instinctively gone over to the side of the Danes, and it is hard to move it to submit its opinion to a thorough examination of facts and points of justice.'

Under these circumstances it was necessarily regarded as a desperate resolution on the part of the German Confederate Assembly, when, on the 22nd of April it declared: 'That the *bona officia* of England in the settling of the differences between Denmark and the German Confederation would be accepted, and that Prussia would be empowered in the name of the Confederation to act accordingly, and would furnish further information concerning the matter.'

The German Confederate envoy in London, Herr Banks was authorised in this affair 'in order to obviate any misunderstanding, to represent to the royal Cabinet of Great Britain the simple grounds of the rights, and the national dignity and honour by which the proceedings of the German Confederacy have been determined in the differences which have arisen with the Crown of Denmark concerning the Confederate State of Holstein, and her inseparable connection with Schleswig.' The envoy was also to point out, 'That the belief that the German Confederacy intended to take away the Duchy of Schleswig from the King of Denmark, was unfounded.

This really succeeded in making a calmer and juster judgment of the matter possible to the English Cabinet, and Lord Palmerston at once endeavoured to come forward with proposals of mediation. Prussia on her side, in a note of the 30th of April addressed to the envoy of Great Britain expressed her readiness to make peace in Schleswig and to withdraw her troops, in accordance with the conditions of the *status quo;* and as the German Diet had given her full power to begin negotiations, there really appeared to be a near prospect of the restoration of harmony.

Meanwhile the Russian envoy in Copenhagen had found an opportunity of bringing forward the proposal of an immediate armistice, and the English envoy Mr Wynne supported this request, which was now addressed directly to General Wrangel, but refused by him.

At the same time Russia intervened in Berlin, and began to assume a most threatening attitude with regard to the German

* Protocol of the Confederate Assembly of the 22nd April, 39th Session.

Confederate Government. The neglect of the Prussian Cabinet to immediately adopt energetic measures against this conduct on the part of Russia, was the reason of the later destiny of Schleswig-Holstein and all the evils which broke over Germany after the year 1848. The disposition of the King of Prussia being what it was, the Arnim Ministry thought it could do nothing better than to trust itself entirely to Lord Palmerston's mediation against the interference of Russia. As Sweden had also meantime protested against the occupation of Jutland by German Confederate troops, and had threatened to send an expedition, the Prussian Ministry was forced back step by step from its originally favourable intentions, and was at length obliged to accept negotiations for an armistice without any previous settlement of a basis on which peace might be made. The Danish Government was thus placed in a most advantageous position to remain silent respecting the future conditions of peace, which Bunsen drew up in the most concise and satisfactory manner on the 18th of May, and to await the time when war might be begun.

In the Prussian memorial addressed to Lord Palmerston, Prussia demanded that the King of Denmark should formally repeal the decision to incorporate Schleswig with the Kingdom of Denmark, and to admit the right of Holstein to be inseparably united with Schleswig. It was presupposed that the united Duchies would remain united with Denmark only through the person of the sovereign, as long as the male issue of the House of Oldenburg ruled in Denmark. With regard to the administration, the finances, the army and fleet and public debts, a complete separation was expected to be arrived at by means of an amicable understanding, and besides this the King of Denmark was to consent to the entrance of the united Duchies into the German Confederacy.

If one represents to one's self these articles of peace intended by Prussia herself in May 1848, with the condition which Prussia afterwards offered to help to bring about, one encounters an enigma which is all the more striking, as Lord Palmerston, in his answer of the 19th of May, by no means

assumed an attitude of opposition against these proposals, but only wished to see the Danish speaking northern inhabitants of Schleswig allowed the freedom of choosing whether they would enter the German Confederacy or be added to the Danish monarchy. The Holstein envoys had, indeed, positively declared themselves, in the German Diet, to be opposed to this breaking up of Schleswig, nevertheless the Confederate Assembly accepted the conditions as the preliminaries of an agreement of peace in the 59th Session on the 30th of May, and agreed to Prussia's proceedings as well as the mediation of the English Cabinet.

Whilst the contesting parties, Denmark, as well as the Duchies, were raising difficulties against the settlement of peace, the Prussian Government had in June empowered Count Pourtalés to negotiate an armistice with Sweden's mediation, the plan of which was first drawn up at Malmöe, and was modified in no small degree a few weeks later at Bellevue, on the 19th of July. In both places, nevertheless, a definite ordering of affairs in the Duchies was avoided, and the effort really made was to find a form under which their administration might be carried on during the time of the armistice.

But the Prussian negotiator had made concessions with regard to this question, which could by no means be carried out, as there were hardly any men amongst the Holsteiners who liked to enter a Government, part of the members of which might be nominated by the King of Denmark, without their names needing to be made known before the settlement of the armistice. Also the question of the approval of the laws and decrees made by the Provisory Government had been left undecided in the bill for the armistice.

There were great difficulties attendant on obtaining Germany's consent to an armistice of this kind, when in Frankfort the Government of the Administrator of the Empire and the Imperial Ministry had only just entered into complete activity, and had to furnish proofs that they were in a position to represent the nation in foreign countries better than the old German Diet had done.

Minister von Auerswald had a difficult task set him to win over the German Imperial Government to consent to the Prussian negotiations for the armistice. The leader of Prussian politics now declared, with praiseworthy frankness, that it was principally consideration for Russia, which forbade the continuance of the war against Denmark.*

The reasons which Auerswald gave the Imperial Ministry for the conclusion of the armistice made an impression of complete honesty, and, if they afterwards complained in Frankfort of Prussia's betrayal of the German cause, this could only be explained at the then stage of events by their complete ignorance of great political relations.

On the other hand, the demands which the Imperial Government made, with regard to the definite conclusion of Prussia's armistice were to the purpose. According to these demands, the Prussian negotiators were only to have full power on condition that they should accept the arrangements of Malmöe and Bellevue, in the name of the Imperial Government, if explicit acknowledgment could be obtained from Denmark:

(1) That the persons to be chosen for the formation of a new universal Government for the Duchies of Holstein and Schleswig had been united before the conclusion of the armistice, purposely and expressly from amongst the combined portions in such a manner that the continuance and the successful efficiency of the new Government would thereby be apparently guaranteed.

(2) That, under the head of the 'existing laws and ordinances,' in the Duchies mentioned in Art. VII, were comprised all those issued there previous to the conclusion of the armistice.

(3) That the troops which, according to Art. VIII, had remained behind in the Duchies of Schleswig-Holstein would all continue under the command of the German Commander-in-Chief.†

JOHN, PRINCE LEININGEN.

* Instructions of the Royal Prussian Government to General von Below, of the 27th July 1848.

† Letter of authorization for Prussia, of August 7, 1848.

But the Imperial Government had sent a plenipotentiary at the same time to the Duchies by way of Berlin, who was more calculated to render the progress of the business difficult, as things stood, than to give any help, as the Danes declared the Government of the Administrator of the Empire to be formed in an unauthorised manner, and would therefore not acknowledge it. The difficult mission, which Heckscher was first to have undertaken, had afterwards been performed by Under-States Secretary Max von Gagern, without there having been any possibility of introducing the conditions imposed by the Imperial Government. The Prussian mediation at Malmöe had finally been placed in the hands of General von Below, who did not get a single one of the Frankfort articles entirely and fully accepted, but contented himself with the fact that the Government to be appointed should remain free to accept or to refuse the laws and ordinances issued after the 17th of March for the Duchies.

The defeat which the Imperial Commissioner, in the person of Herr Max von Gagern, had additionally suffered through the fact that he was neither called upon to take part in the negotiations at Malmöe, nor was able to enter into immediate business relations with the Prussian negotiator, General von Below, but received all enlightenment respecting the course of things at Malmöe in a roundabout way, through the Foreign Office at Berlin, this open thrusting aside of the Central Power by Prussia had contributed much to the pertinacity with which the armistice of Malmöe was opposed in Frankfort.

They considered themselves justified in assuming that Prussia had acted with deliberately bad intentions, and that the secrecy of the decision of the 26th of August was connected with a tendency to place the Imperial Government and the National Assembly in a position of constraint. That consequences arose from these unfortunate misunderstandings in the course of events in Frankfort, I was able, as I have already related, to observe with my own eyes. That I could not join in the cry of those who even at that time asserted that Prussia was faithless to the Schleswig-Holstein cause, and regarded all

her steps in matters relating to the armistice of Malmöe as a deceitful diplomatic game, will be remembered from my letters concerning the relations in Frankfort, which I reproduced above.

That Prussia's position was a very difficult one at the moment, and that Auerswald certainly was right when he remarked in July how little the English Cabinet might be counted upon in case of a great European complication, was also only too well known to me. The seven-months' armistice could under no circumstances have been more favourable to Denmark's cause than it was in the summer of 1848; but it could be hoped that a consolidation of the relations in Germany would meantime take place, which would have permitted a different manner of speech towards Foreign Powers. It really all depended upon whether the Prussian Government would summon sufficient courage to do what was necessary. In any case the negotiations for peace which were soon to be opened would show how far King Frederick William IV would keep the promises made to the Schleswig-Holsteiners—through the mouth of the Duke of Augustenburg, at the breaking out of the complication.

Section II of the armistice declared it to be expressly understood that the determinations of this convention were in no way prejudicial to the conditions of the definite peace, concerning which negotiations were to be immediately opened, and that neither the German Confederacy nor Denmark would surrender the claims and rights which they had established on both sides.

There were already great difficulties after the ratification which had been made of the armistice, attendant on the constitution of the universal Government for the Duchies, which was made prospective in Art. VIII, and on the 9th of October, after long negotiations, Messrs Boysen, Heintze, Moltke, Preuszer and Reventlow declared themselves ready to accept the power conferred on them as far as regarded the armistice. Count Theodore von Reventlow of Jarsbeck and Stegen was the president of this chief Government council. K. Stedtmann performed the functions of Imperial Commissioner, whilst the

Danes, significantly enough, forthwith declined the right accorded them by Art. VIII of the armistice to appoint a commissioner, under pretext that the agreement had been broken by the promulgation of the States fundamental law in the Duchies.

Quickly and well as the administration of Schleswig-Holstein was now set going, and excellent as were the men who had taken their places at the head of the Ministry, the condition of the Duchies remained more than doubtful, as long as the negotiations for peace did not take a favourable course. Under these circumstances, it depended mostly on the activity of the two Ministries, on the Foreign Office and the War Department. In the latter, Prince von Noer had given way to General Bonin, who, during the winter, had increased and improved the armed forces of the Duchies to a considerable, if not a very extensive, degree: Government Councillor von Harbou, who was over him, knew how to influence the foreign Governments with great circumspection, and obtained no small success, particularly in England and France.

As far as the negotiations for peace were concerned, when the Universal Government was established in the Duchies, three proposals were made for the lessening of the differences between Germany and Denmark; two proceeded from the British Cabinet, the third pointed out the Danish Government as the only possible solution of the quarrel, and obtained the liveliest support from Sweden and Russia, and, at first, from France.

The first and oldest proposal for the ordering of the affairs of Schleswig was that which Lord Palmerston had clung to since the beginning of the conflict, and according to which a division of Schleswig, according to nationalities, should be made.

For my part, I had always looked upon the latter solution of the question as the most proper one, and, although I had less opportunities at that time of taking an immediate part in the diplomatic negotiations, yet, where I could, I advocated this national division of the public domains of Schleswig.

I have kept a map on which, in accordance with the immediate experience and observations which I was able to make in the year 1849 in Schleswig, I marked the desired boundaries with a line, which, remarkable to say, received a rare confirmation of its correctness twenty-eight years later, when the well-known fifth Article of the Peace of Prague was concluded.

In the years 1848 and 1849 I discussed the above-mentioned division with many German and English statesmen, and believe that my opinion was not entirely without influence in the fact that the English Cabinet clung so obstinately and perseveringly to this point of view.

On the other hand, the division of Schleswig was so angrily fought against by Holstein, that Palmerston soon let the matter drop at the negotiations of 1848 and 1849. Hereupon he answered for the maintenance of the *status quo* of the armistice in such a manner that Schleswig should remain bound to Holstein at the conclusion of peace by a joint Government and a common Parliament, and should be incorporated with no division, neither for the German Empire nor for Denmark.

On the other hand the Spanish proposal pointed out that: Schleswig not only receives the rights assured to her of separate administration, and the protection of the language and nationality of her inhabitants, by the royal proclamation of the 27th March of this year, but a Schleswig Ministry at Copenhagen in the place of the German Chancery, her own Representative Assembly, with independent administration of finances, after a deduction from the general expenses of the State for the civil list, public debts, foreign representation, the army and the navy.

The unacceptableness of the latter proposal as a basis for the treaty of peace was agreed upon on all sides, and even the English Cabinet acknowledged in a perfectly loyal manner the intentions expressed therein secretly to incorporate Schleswig. If Prussia were to come forward independently and decidedly, it could not fail to become evident at once that Denmark did not desire peace at all. The negotiations

were all the more willingly left this time to the Frankfort Central Power, the more it failed from month to month to win the necessary consideration from Foreign Powers. By means of a number of the most hateful measures, the Danes were trying to undermine the Joint Government established by agreement in the Duchies, and to destroy its credit with the Foreign Powers.

Immediately after the conclusion of the armistice, Denmark protested against the sanction given by the Joint Government to all laws and ordinances of the Provisory Government since March 22, 1848. Then the administration of the islands of Alsen and Arroe furnished the desired opportunity of accusing the Joint Government of breach of convention. In further continuance of the attitude adopted against the Joint Government, the so-called Schleswig-Holstein Chancery in Copenhagen issued a rescript, on the 18th of November, which stated that the Joint Government of the Duchies was an insurgent body, and challenged the inhabitants of Schleswig to disobey its decrees, particularly to refuse to pay taxes.

The insurrection of the Danish speaking North Schleswigers stood in immediate connection with this intrigue proceeding from Copenhagen, the history of which filled whole volumes of diplomatic documents. The Danish Cabinet desired to prove to all Europe, and particularly to the English, that the country was discontented with the separation from Denmark, brought about by the conventions of the armistice. To this end a so-called protest was fabricated, and brought to the knowledge of the Foreign Cabinets, in which the pretended population of all Schleswig declared itself against any union with Germany, and could on no account hear of being separated from Denmark.

When one adds to this, that endless disputes had arisen concerning the retrograding of ships, on which an embargo had been laid, concerning boundaries and the marching of troops, the exchange of political prisoners and prisoners of war, the postal connections to be restored, and many other things of the kind, and the latter were brought before the

English Cabinet, as guarantors of the agreement of the armistice, with Danish tenacity, in ever-renewed documents of complaint, the wish to bring about a definite state of things in the Duchies was comprehensible enough.

But all Palmerston's efforts to keep the negotiations going remained for a long time fruitless, and only in February, 1849, were the many projects, which had meantime been worked out and established, brought under more particular discussion in the diplomatic Conference in London. The representation of the rights of Schleswig-Holstein had in this case become, so to say, a private matter for Baron de Bunsen, who, in spite of his conviction that his Sovereign and King desired peace at any price, accepted the authority to negotiate for the German Central Power.

The Imperial Ministry had, for its part, accepted Gagern's opinion that nothing was now to be obtained in the Schleswig-Holstein affair without Prussia.

Under these circumstances Bunsen decided to bring forward a project of peace on his own responsibility in the beginning of January, which, it is true, astonished everyone and excited surprise by the universality and completeness of the solution of the joint Schleswig-Holstein questions, but offered extraordinarily little prospect of finding acceptance at that period. Nevertheless the energetic envoy of Prussia, who, in this matter—I might almost say and exceptionally—had influence at Court through my brother, as well as in the Cabinet through Palmerston, succeeded in laying his plans for peace before the Conference. But no one was deceived as regarded the fact that most of Baron Bunsen's proposals would have had to be forced on the Danes by main strength.

If they allowed themselves to enter into discussion concerning them, it only happened because this allowed them an opportunity of keeping their real intentions secret, and of spinning out the negotiations until the end of the armistice.

According to Bunsen's opinion, the Danes could be won over to a personal union between Schleswig-Holstein and Denmark, something like that which exists between Sweden and Norway, if the question of hereditary succession could be

solved in such a way that the maintenance of the United States would be assured for the future.

I have lying before me a statement from the agent then acting for the Government of Schleswig-Holstein in London, Karl Samwers, concerning these proposals of Bunsen's, which at the same time shows what the situation was at the beginning of the year 1849. Samwers was chief of the office of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs* under the joint Government, and had been sent to London in order, particularly through Bunsen and Stockmar, to establish with the English Cabinet an understanding of the views of the Schleswig-Holstein Government. The information he sent to the Government was obtained from the best sources, and it will therefore be of value to reproduce a few parts of it here. On the 7th of January he writes:

'In consequence of a memorial concerning the conditions of Peace between Germany and Denmark, Herr von Bunsen has been requested to come to Berlin as speedily as possible, in order to expose his views more clearly, and then to return here by way of Frankfort. In Frankfort he is to try to form an association for instructions.

'Bunsen started yesterday evening for Berlin. He confidentially acquainted me with the entire contents of the memorial before he left; it is really as follows: Denmark despairs of the possibility of saving the present monarchy, therefore she desires to separate Holstein from it, the sooner the better, she would prefer to do so at once. She hopes in this way to dam the stream of democratic contagion coming from Germany.

'On the other hand, she wishes to bind Schleswig all the more firmly to the monarchy. Under the title of Schleswig's independence with equal hereditary succession, she brings forward a proposal for peace which cannot be accepted, and must be regarded as a *casus belli* for it is a disguised incorporation, and something even worse than that. The civil lists, army, navy, states' debts of Schleswig are to be in

* State Hand-Book for the Duchies of Schleswig-Holstein for the year 1849.

common with those of Denmark, and the expenses therefore granted by the Danish Diet.

'It is now clear that the Schleswigers will soon wish to give up their severed Diet and take part in the Danish one, so that they may have a right to determine with them, and that in this way a "complete incorporation would occur, and that with the goodwill of the Schleswigers."

'The obstinacy with which the Danes insist upon this project and will continue to insist upon it to the point of preferring war, has for sole reason the fact that they must give up Holstein as lost, on account of her hereditary succession and the popular feeling. Unless, therefore, war be desired, a project must be laid before Denmark which will encourage her to keep Holstein.

'But war cannot be desired: for it could hardly be carried on by the Duchies alone. The Danish army numbers 25,000 men, the 18,000 men of the Duchies are young troops, without discipline, and are held together more through Bonin than through anything else. If they won a victory with the help of the Volunteer Corps, through this help war would once more break out between Denmark and Germany. But if they succumb, the sentiments which still predominate in Germany being what they are, it would be impossible not to come to their help. But a German army, which would again break its oath, could not remain eight days in Schleswig without ignominy, but would have to pass beyond the boundaries of Jutland, and the opportunity would then occur for which Russia and Sweden are waiting in order to declare war against Germany.

'It would be equally impossible to extend the present *status quo* for any great length of time. For the Danes regard it as more unbearable than a war. They have realised that they lose more with every moment of its continuance.

'It is true that the Belgian relations of 1830 furnish the example of a similar very firm *status quo*; but the difference is, that this *status quo* was desired by all European Powers, and all would have turned against the man who wished to break it, but that in the present case Russia and France are

decidedly for Denmark, and only England is not entirely against Germany.

'In the Treaty of Peace, the following points must be strictly observed. Nothing unendurable or impossible must be required of Denmark—nothing must be settled which, of itself, or on account of the feeling of the country in the Duchies, is impossible. Germany and Prussia must come out of the transaction with honour, and Prussia must accept the matter, in spite of the thanklessness she has already experienced, for she expressed herself first and most decidedly of all concerning the matter.

'In Frankfort they are also beginning to realise that nothing can be done unless Prussia, as necessity has proved, makes a Prussian envoy the mediator. Finally, those transactions must be joined to the Palmerston proposals of January. A basis is here furnished by two alternatives; the alternative of division is, however, impossible; for, firstly, no one in the Duchies wishes the division; and lastly, Denmark does not wish it. The second alternative has become impossible through Section II and III of the German Constitution. Nothing therefore remains, except to place Schleswig and Holstein in the same relation to Denmark, as Norway is to Sweden; only in this way can Denmark summon the courage to keep Holstein. Sweden is doing very well with this alliance, and Norway is only one-fourth of the united state, the Duchies are two-fifths.

'The basis of the negotiations for peace must therefore be: Schleswig and Holstein to be a Duchy, united by a Parliament in such a manner, nevertheless, that there should be no fear that this relation is only a precursor to a complete separation.

'The residence of the Ministry in the Duchies is an unavoidable necessity, the continuance of the Chancery in Copenhagen impossible. Provincial representative assemblies will be formed for both Duchies, having in their charge the affairs which the German Imperial Chancery in Holstein is competent to undertake.

'Thus the Schleswig Parliament negotiates separately with regard to the army, the navy, commercial rights, roads,

streets, canals and representation. But at the same time Denmark must be offered the settlement of a joint hereditary succession with the Duchies for all time, for only thus is it certain that the above project will not have as a consequence the breaking loose of both Duchies in a few years.

'The negotiations concerning the Danish rights to the throne will meet with no difficulty. Of the agnatic claims, those of the House of Augustenburg are the least disputed, those of the Russians are the best founded, but the latter are dangerous on account of Russia's power. Therefore the Gottorf line in its youngest branches must be placed before that of Augustenburg, but the latter must have Oldenburg in compensation. It appears as if the Danish party desire to make the five year old son of Prince Christian of Glücksburg the successor to the throne, but the Hereditary Grand-Duke of Oldenburg is still of such an age that he can be given a Danish education, and that the compensating equivalent which he can offer the Augustenburgers is to be preferred on account of Russia.

'But, on account of a joint hereditary succession, this negotiation offers at the same time an opportunity of winning Russia over to the plan and driving her into it. Russia ought to have been accepted this summer as a mediating power; that it did not happen was a mistake, which, however, had to be made on account of "public opinion" in Germany. It is to be hoped that it can be repaired in the manner suggested.

'This is essentially the matter contained in Herr Bunsen's views, such as he has laid before the Berlin Cabinet. I do not need to mention, that the actual mistakes are least to be attributed to my reproduction.

'I add in explanation, a few appropriate remarks which Bunsen made to me in the course of conversation, when I opposed to the plan those reasons which would most naturally occur to the mind.

'The state of things thus brought about did not need to last interminably, the only thing to be done was to order matters for the present. There was no equivalent which might be offered to Denmark for her consent to the entrance

of Schleswig into the German Empire; any that might be suggested was too small, as Russia was decidedly against it.

'Denmark would consider the offer of the vote according to Count Reventlow's plan in the light of a bad joke, as she had already violently opposed the vote according to Palmerston's plan, as she objected that every vote undertaken under a German Government must fall out unluckily on account of its power and influence.

'It would undoubtedly be better to leave the particulars of the succession undecided, but to do this would be difficult. Besides that, the succession of the male issue was never set up as an object in Germany, the letter of the King of Prussia to the Duke of Augustenburg is not of an official character.

'In the transactions concerning the peace, the negotiator must know wherein lay the *casus belli*; but this could not be settled in Frankfort, while a war can be decided on there, but not carried out.

'The above developed view of Bunsen is, indeed, no more than simply a private plan. Bunsen has communicated the principal features to Lord Palmerston, and the latter has answered: he did not see why this plan would not do. He had further communicated it to Brunnow, and the latter had received it in a very friendly manner, and had expressed himself as being not unfavourable to the plan, and had written in this sense to the Russian Court; but he had had no news up to yesterday.

'Both Palmerston and Brunnow remarked concerning the determination arrived at regarding the hereditary succession that they do not understand why the matter should be made still more complicated than it already was by adding the hereditary succession question. Bunsen had meantime made it clear to them that without this determination Denmark could not be won over to the plan. The Prussian Government had expressed itself as agreeing generally with Bunsen, and had sent a communication of this fact to Meyendorff.

'Finally, Bunsen told me that Count O. Rantzau had said in a short memorial to Lord Palmerston, that the proposed plan appeared to them to be a thoroughly good one.

'Under these circumstances, and owing to the shortness of the time which was left me for it, I have, for my part, only been able to offer general objections to this project, which, according to my opinion, if carried out, can only bring about a continual series of quarrels, incessant political excitement, and, in the end, a new outbreak.

'I have especially tried to make Bunsen attentive to the fact that if Palmerston and Brunnow agree to it more or less, or without introducing the hereditary succession question, and only Denmark should wish for this introduction, it would be a mistake for the German side to forcibly place this point by the side of a project which Denmark does not consider a sacrifice as regards Schleswig, and which has already been put into a form much more favourable for us, without demanding the perpetuation of the personal union, that, finally, this concession could always be made against the consent of Denmark to the addition of Schleswig to the Empire.

'I have further drawn attention to the fact that if the project is in any way to be carried out, and not to fail at once in the Duchies, two points must necessarily be observed: 1. That the community of the representative Assembly is a rule to be kept, and 2. That the separation of the administration from that of Denmark must be thoroughly carried out in those points where there is no community with Holstein.

'Neither is the case according to Bunsen's plan; Schleswig must have her army, navy and representation in common with Denmark. At his request I furnished him with a short written explanation.

'Finally, I allow myself to observe that it is to be feared that Herr Bunsen's plan will be still more weakened in Berlin. I can say that I know that the Berlin Cabinet a short time since considered the *casus belli* to lie not in the complete separation of an independent Schleswig from Holstein, but only in an incorporation. I should still like to believe that the fear of a renewal of the war with the really, or only apparently belligerent kingdom of Denmark, will lead, at least in the negotiations, where everything depends upon

mutual concessions, to a deviation from Bunsen's plan, so far, that Banks' plan will remain as the result.

'I should, therefore, like to lay the question before the consideration of a high Government, whether it is not perhaps suitable to exercise influence over the consultations in Berlin by means of a trusty envoy, such as Herr Franeke, and to instruct him, at the approaching consultation at Frankfort, to aim at the observation of the Parliamentary union as a rule, as well as the complete separation of the Schleswig administration from the Danish one, as a *conditio sine qua non*, and, if possible, that the question of hereditary succession be left untouched, as far as this project is concerned.'

So much for the Schleswig-Holstein *chargé d' affaires* in London. As a fact, the peace project of the Prussian envoy had been as good as set aside during his absence from London. Palmerston, who, during the continued breach of the convention of the armistice, had become more and more convinced that a renewal or lengthening of the armistice was not to be thought of, urged with ever-increasing earnestness the opening of negotiations for peace, on the basis of the proposal made by him for a division of Schleswig, according to nationalities.

When Bunsen returned from Berlin and Frankfort to London he was prepared to negotiate for peace, and to make every concession to Denmark which might be demanded with regard to Schleswig, so that even Lord Palmerston appeared to represent the German cause.

Regarding this turn of things, Samwers writes on the 23rd of February:

'That on which Bunsen relies to defend his instructions is an alliance of Russia, France, and Sweden with Denmark, of which a high Government meantime has, no doubt, received news through Berlin. Bunsen tells me that he himself has read the letter from the Emperor of Russia to the King of Prussia.

'He writes that he would rather give him notice himself of the alliance agreed upon, than that he should hear of it

through others. The alliance is, according to Bunsen's explanation, as follows: "If war breaks out again, Russia will send 30,000 men, France 30,000, Sweden 30,000 to Schleswig; if the boundaries of Jutland are passed by the German troops, Russia will let 100,000 men enter East Prussia. The supposed case is natural, namely, that war will be renewed between Germany and Denmark."'

As may be seen, Prussian diplomacy did not fail not only to feel anxiety in every way, but also to alarm their allies, and, most of all, the unfortunate Government of Schleswig-Holstein. For that many circumstances were still necessary for the carrying out of this doubtful alliance was not hard to see. But it suited the Prussian Cabinet best to be able to place itself in the light of being forced and urged to make a speedy end of the really hated matter by giving up Schleswig.

Stockmar, then in London, had therefore rightly given the Schleswig-Holsteiners the assurance that, if they could not help themselves, they would certainly be abandoned by Prussia. As is plainly discerned from the information furnished by Samwers, Stockmar, even then, did not deceive himself about the Prussian support, and it may possibly be set down as owing to his influence that even my brother declared the Holstein-Schleswig affair to be so badly managed, that he considered a speedy peace at any price most desirable.

Meantime, envoys from Sweden and Denmark had arrived at the Conference which had already begun in London, but this did not prevent Denmark's warlike sentiments from being plainly exposed to view through her plenipotentiary Reventlow. An early warning that the armistice was at an end, as far as Denmark was concerned, was declared by him as being only natural.

Diplomatists in London wavered undecidedly between the question of the extension of the armistice and the hasty conclusion of peace at any price. On the 23rd of February, Lord Palmerston came forward with the formal proposal of an extension of the armistice until the 26th of June, but care had been taken that even the most unavoidable modifications in

the agreement of Malmöe should offer, at least, as many difficulties as even the preliminaries of peace.

The independence of Schleswig had been recognised as the only basis for the latter, and Bunsen again worked out, with indefatigable dexterity, a comprehensive memorandum, the diffuseness and want of clearness of which gave the Danes every opportunity of making the negotiations unsuccessful. People became more and more convinced of the entire unfitness of Bunsen to obtain anything from such an enemy. And, concerning this, Samwers himself wrote on the 26th of February, in a manner worthy of attention:

'The negotiations concerning this work have fully convinced me of Bunsen's *unfitness* to lead them; Baron Stockmar agrees with me in this, hoping, meanwhile, that something may be gained from the mistakes which the Danes are making. To the intimate knowledge and craftiness of the Danes Bunsen will, in the verbal negotiations in general, as well as individually, expose himself in the worst manner, and his mental skill will help him but little against their firmness.

'The worst of the matter is, that he believes himself to be thoroughly and entirely fitted for the work. For my part, I cannot look on much longer, and at the first opportunity shall be forced to differ entirely from him.'

In the negotiations concerning the plans for peace the most incredible things had indeed occurred. In the protocol for Schleswig's independence the Danes had demanded the insertion of a phrase which ran: *Laissant intacte l'union* indissoluble qui existe entre le dit Duché et la couronne de Danemarck.* In order to make this phrase acceptable, Palmerston had altered it unknown to the Danes, and communicated it to the German Cabinet in a milder form. When, late enough, Bunsen noticed that he had been completely deceived in the matter, Palmerston, indeed, acknowledged his falsification of the original proposal of Denmark, but nevertheless demanded that Germany must accept the

* Leaving intact the indissoluble union which exists between the said Duchy and the Crown of Denmark.

words inserted by the Danes in the English formula, to avoid compromising the Cabinet.

All these apparent intrigues had as a result that at the middle of March the German cause appeared, diplomatically speaking, to be in rather an advantageous condition. Germany's love of peace and even that of the Schleswig-Holstein Government were certainly not to be doubted. A clever and energetic management of the business would, as in the year 1864, have succeeded in bringing forward against Denmark proofs of stubbornness and disturbance of the peace, and forcing the mediating Powers to express themselves against the Danish pretensions.

Besides, even the friends of Denmark were exceedingly weary of the bullying attitude of the Cabinet there with regard to the armistice question. Sweden sent a very earnest note to Copenhagen, in which she explained that, if Denmark declared the armistice to be at an end, she would lay all the blame to her, and that she would then declare herself free from all obligations to Denmark, and not come to the latter's help.

The Russians, also, were by this time decided upon warning their discourteous *protégée*. Brunnow, as well as Bunsen and Palmerston, explained that he would highly disapprove of an end being put to the armistice, and that he had told the Danes that they were entirely ruining their cause in this way, as it would be no less than an aggression and a declaration of war.

But at that time there was no proper comprehension in Berlin of such favourable moments. One heard of nothing there but the efforts to avoid war at any price. The hindrances to the peace, which, it was pretended, came from Schleswig and Frankfort alone, were particularly badly judged in many circles of the Prussian Residence, and pointed out as a sad consequence of political immorality, the decay of the fidelity of the subjects, the democratic disorder, and other pet phrases.

Far be it from me to give a complete picture of the

negotiations in which Prussia invariably urged the most entire compliance. Bunsen himself grew so angry that he called the part which Germany played a deeply degrading one, and boldly asserted of Prussia that she had forfeited any consideration which the world might have felt for her.

It would lead me too far from the object of my description if I were to attempt to depict, step by step, the conduct of the Powers towards belligerent Denmark: how they finally agreed that the unruly *protégée* could put an end to the armistice on her own account, how they tried to decide the Danish Cabinet to delay hostilities, at least until the 15th of April, how they at length contented themselves with the fact that an armistice had been promised until the 10th of April, and how, even in this, they were disappointed by the small State, as it declared war immediately after the expiration of the armistice on the 26th of March, and opened hostilities on the 3rd of April.

All these circumstances which, if not exactly honourable, were, at least in a certain sense, advantageous for Germany, were so clearly shown in London in the second half of March, that no Power could, even remotely, think of supporting Denmark at this moment. It had been pretended that the small Kingdom, which began to play the 'would-be great,' would call on its powerful friends, in order to seek support from them against the aggressive tendencies of Germany and Prussia, but even its favourers could only consider the war, which it was about to begin, to be a piece of temerity.

But Berlin must have been somewhat better informed concerning the relations than Frankfort and South Germany, if one is to impute even the slightest reflection to the conduct of the Danish Government. I do not, indeed, bring forward the assertion that a single man in Prussia had had the intention of complying with the Danes, but what I was afterwards to see and to experience personally, showed, at least, that there appeared to exist a kind of pre-established harmony between the gods of war on both sides, as in the Iliad, the

Olympians agree amongst themselves whilst the war of men is fluctuating around Troy.

I cannot refrain from adding here to close the chapter, an interesting letter from Samwers describing the state of things in London on the 31st of March 1849:

'The Danish ultimatum was only placed in Bunsen's hands late yesterday evening, and then when the twenty-four hours' respite allowed for acceptance had expired. At the drawing-room on the 29th inst., Count Reventlow expressed himself as follows to Bunsen: he had detained the courier, who was to take back Bunsen's answer, or, rather, his acceptance of the ultimatum to Copenhagen, as long as it was in any way possible.

'This was the first that Bunsen had heard of the ultimatum, he at once turned to Lord Palmerston, and then it came out that the latter had had this ultimatum in his possession for the past twenty-four hours, without having read it, the twenty-four hours in which Bunsen was to answer. For the accompanying note to Lord Palmerston explained: The time had been so reckoned that the courier, who had brought this ultimatum, in case the German plenipotentiaries accepted it in twenty-four hours, would return in time to prevent the outbreak of hostilities. Lord Palmerston sent this note with the ultimatum as a counter-project to Bunsen on the evening of the 29th, but without formally recommending its acceptance as a mediating Power.

'I found the ultimatum at Bunsen's yesterday. His indisposition had so greatly increased, that I almost feared it would be lasting. Added to this, one of those officially confidential despatches from Count Arnim arrived this morning, which was not exactly calculated to raise Bunsen's courage. This last despatch, which was brought by an army-messenger, ran as follows: "It had astonished him, Count A. very much, that Bunsen, after the last news, had not yet signed the last protocol of the 13th inst., he hoped, meanwhile, that this would be done at once. Should this not be the case,

they would be forced to accept the accompanying Danish ultimatum."

'Although I could feel pretty certain that Bunsen would not yield, I went to Baron Stockmar and Dr Meyer, in order to decide them to keep him to his former good intentions. The former is an authority to Bunsen, the latter can do much with him because of their friendship of twenty years' standing. Both have dissuaded him from allowing himself to be in any way drawn into a discussion concerning the ultimatum.

'The note was sent to Lord Palmerston yesterday, in which Bunsen refuses. He explains in it that he is not justified in accepting it. Besides, he added, it was unheard of that the space of twenty-four hours only should be allowed for the consideration of such an ultimatum, particularly when it was known that the plenipotentiary could have no instructions concerning it. Further, it was strikingly apparent that, at the bottom, a treaty of peace was desired, and not the preliminaries thereof, as would be furnished by the occupation of Schleswig.

'This note displayed no great consciousness, as the unfortunate remark occurs in it that Germany did not desire to determine the future form of things individually in Schleswig, in the treaty of peace, but would be satisfied with the establishment of the basis only.

'Meanwhile Bunsen's notes are regularly left unread by Palmerston, who complains of their number and length.

'Bunsen also communicated with the Prussian Ministry yesterday, and as follows: His position as plenipotentiary of the German Central Power was still the same. It had positively forbidden him to accept Article 3 of the protocol of the 13th inst., therefore there could be no thought of accepting the ultimatum.

'I will remark in addition, that Bunsen, who takes things easily and somewhat personally, asserts that the Danes only wanted to frighten him with the ultimatum, and that an outbreak of hostilities is not to be thought of. I find no occasion to dispute this opinion.

'Despatches from Arnim will not easily influence Bunsen to neglect his plain duty towards the Central Power, even if he really supposes that these despatches only express the sentiments of the King. How it will be when the King himself writes to him, I cannot say. I fear that he will not remain steady. But no one here doubts that, after the breaking out of war, the King will do everything in order to establish peace quickly.'

## CHAPTER III

INEFFICIENT STATE OF SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN WAR DEPARTMENT.—GENERAL VON PRITTWITZ COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE IMPERIAL TROOPS.—DIFFICULTY AS TO THE DUKE'S APPOINTMENT TO THE ARMY.—APPOINTMENT TO CHIEF COMMAND OF THURINGIAN CONTINGENT.—INTERVIEW WITH VON PRITTWITZ UNSATISFACTORY.—AT GOTTORF.—REPORT FROM VON STIEGLITZ.—THE OPTICAL TELEGRAPH.—THE SEA FIGHT OF ECKERNFÖRDE.—ROMANTIC ESCAPE OF A NORWEGIAN COUNT.—LETTER TO PRINCE ALBERT.—HIS REPLY.—SCHLEIDEN'S REPORT.

DURING the course of the negotiations for peace or an armistice, in the winter of 1848-49, everyone on all sides was in the highest degree interested in learning how the military forces stood in Schleswig-Holstein. One heard a great deal of the activity of the Schleswig-Holstein War Department, and the momentary popularity of Bonin's name was sufficient to inspire the upper North of the German Empire with the belief that the highest opinion should be entertained of this army.

Meanwhile, a closer insight into the military relations of the Duchies was calculated to make the matter appear less bright. The newspapers which were favourable to the Duchies spoke lightly enough of an army of from 25,000 to 30,000 men, which the Danes would find ready for them, and at St Paul's in Frankfort, very excessive hopes were on every occasion aroused with regard to the Schleswig-Holstein military power.

The country's own Government had, on their side, an interest in showing the strength and equipment of the army in as favourable a light as possible, partly in order to raise

courage in their own land, partly in order to lay greater emphasis on the diplomatic demands. Nevertheless, their official communications were much more modest.

In a note issued by the governing circle of Schleswig-Holstein, which lies before me, the effective strength of the army is put down as 19,503, of these, 3729 are given leave as a reserve; 3500 men can be called in on the 10th of March, and 3500 on the 10th of May. In this total number the artillery had been reckoned, which was 3000 men strong, and six complete batteries, amongst them two 12-lb, one mounted and eight foot batteries, each with eight cannons. Cavalry was entirely wanting. In January, two Hanseatic squadrons were in Schleswig, in order to cover this deficiency, but Denmark having reclaimed them, they were withdrawn.

As the equipment of the army still left a great deal to be desired, it was no miscalculation when one said that after the expiration of the Malmöe armistice, Bonin could not possibly take the field with more than 15,000 men. One can therefore judge by this how little foundation there was in the hope that Schleswig-Holstein could independently oppose Denmark.

Stockmar, and particularly Bunsen, had nourished the supposition in London that the Schleswig-Holsteiners could gain their end by means of their own strength. Indeed, both statesmen were too well informed to favour any overrating of the Schleswig-Holstein means of defence to so great a degree as was customary in the liberal circles of Germany: but it was a great political mistake to allow the slightest error to exist concerning this point.

On the Central Power in Frankfort, fortunately, no deception of the kind had been practised. General von Peucker was far too serious and thorough a soldier to fail to recognise the necessity of sending a considerable number of Imperial troops to the Duchies.

Without allowing themselves to be led astray by the negotiations for peace, the members of the war office worked early and industriously in order to prevent an invasion by the Danes at the expiration of the armistice. On the 3rd of March the Imperial Ministry had already settled the number

of troops to be contributed by the individual Confederate States, and forwarded the lists everywhere with the greatest secrecy.

The combined strength of the army ordered to Schleswig consisted of 46,646 men. Coburg and Gotha contributed a battalion of 8000 men, which received marching orders from Frankfort on the 11th of March, and was to cross the Elbe on the 24th, and enter Altona. Further orders were to be communicated to the battalion by the commander-in-chief of the combined forces there.

On the 17th of March the General in command of the royal Prussian corps of Guards, Lieutenant-General von Prittwitz was appointed as Commander-in-Chief of the Imperial troops intended to form an active army, and Major-General von Hahn was appointed Chief of the General Staff, having filled the same post during the past year with the Commander-in-Chief, at that time General von Wrangel.

If these arrangements appeared to inspire the supposition of a complete co-operation and a clear understanding between the Central Power and the Prussian Government, the choice of a man like Prittwitz raised the hope that the war would be conducted more energetically and seriously than in former years.

At the time when the mobilisation of the German Confederate troops was a settled thing in Frankfort, I had the fact recalled to the Imperial War Ministry that I was looking for a military occupation, and wished to take part in the coming campaign. I had commissioned Minister von Stein, who had gone to Frankfort in March, carefully to look out for my opportunity; and although I knew that my old and anxious statesmen would be unwilling to see his country's ruler go on the battlefield, I did not doubt that he would take every possible pains in order to obtain what I wanted for me. But Herr von Stein encountered difficulties which he at first only hinted at vaguely, but which were afterwards expressed in the formula, that, under the circumstance that so many older generals were to be considered, it was extremely difficult to offer me a position in the army of Schleswig-Holstein corresponding to my rank.

That this was simply refusing a Prince, whose entirely German and popular opinions were known, a wider sphere of activity, for political reasons, is more than I can assert; but while describing the situation, I cannot help introducing word for word the decisive question which Minister von Stein at length put to me on the 18th of March:

'Your Highness has as yet communicated to me no resolve in answer to my humble inquiry sent a few days ago, concerning a military command which is to be conferred on Your Highness, and I am forced to send off an estafet with the present news, as General von Peucker was with me and made the following communication: It is feasible to give Your Highness a command in the army of Schleswig, but only that of the five Thuringian battalions: Weimar, Meiningen, Altenburg, Reuss and Coburg-Gotha; but, in order to effect this, he must have Your Highness's declaration that Your Highness desires a command in this war, and that Your Highness does not lay claim to such a one as would be suitable to your position as General.

'Although I do not doubt that Your Highness could not accept such a command at the present moment, as 100 substitutes can be found to undertake it, whereas the duties of Your Highness's calling as Duke of Coburg-Gotha can be entrusted to no other man, now, when you are occupied in establishing the German Constitution, and thereby the relations between the individual States, when the question of uniting Coburg and Gotha is to be decided, when the Diets of both Duchies are in full activity, I nevertheless consider it my duty to bring the intimation of the War Minister to Your Highness's knowledge as speedily as possible.

'It will be less difficult for Your Highness to refuse with a few words of thanks, considering the fact that you can very easily be placed under the command of the Hessian General Spangenberg, and that the command offered to Your Highness is such as a Colonel can manage. With the greatest respect, VON STEIN.

'*Frankfort, March 18th*, '49, 1 *o'clock, p.m.*'

It could plainly be seen that there was but little inclination in Frankfort to meet my wishes, but even under these circumstances I at once decided unconditionally to accept the War Minister's proposals. I sent Captain von Fritsch, the same who, as General, commanded the Saxon cavalry in so masterful a manner in 1866, to Frankfort, to conclude the affair, and made all preparations at home, in order to be able to join the army with the knowledge that all my duties as a ruler had been properly performed. The motive of my determination, which was received with as great pleasure by the people, as well as the governing circles, not only of my own lands, but with critical attention elsewhere, I explained to my brother with my usual frankness:

'I wrote to you last autumn that the Central Power had made me the offer of a command in case of need. I agreed even at that early date, and I clearly foresaw that the supreme decision would be followed by war. Times have not grown better, but worse. The German nation has neither internal strength nor energy enough, it neither knows what it will nor what it should do. The Princes are, indeed, still on their thrones, but they are already again in the meshes of Cabinet and Court intrigues. There are no good designs entertained towards us small sovereigns.

'The representative assemblies are doing their utmost to commit suicide, and the larger States are setting snares and traps in numbers to catch the sovereigns. In this unpleasant situation the Central Power asked me through the Imperial War Ministry whether I would take the chief command of our *Thuringian* contingent in the campaign against the Danes.

'I should have declined any other command of the kind, but I could not refuse this one, as, in the present condition of our States, it is important to keep the executive power in our own hands. I will give no political reasons here, as, if you judge the state of things in Germany correctly, you will share my views. I received marching orders yesterday evening, so was therefore only able to surprise our Assembly with the news to-day. I have tried, in the accompanying

note, to repeat my words to the representatives as circumstantially as possible; you will see from it how I think.*

'To my great pleasure the representatives received the news with real enthusiasm. Throughout the whole town, which has naturally only been in possession of the news for a few hours past, it has aroused more animation than complaint. During the next few days I shall put everything in order here, and lay down complete instructions. The day of my departure is not yet settled, I shall take the command as a Saxon General, and have chosen from our own army a general staff which will contain most excellent men.

'I had expected the fall of the hereditary Emperors, so we once more find ourselves *vis-à-vis de rien*. We can only be pitied, as we now depend upon fools and villains, I have often thought of you with longing; we could make use now of a healthy understanding and particularly of a fleet, but still more of *money*.

'I may be said to be carrying on war with Denmark myself, as, in addition, I shall have to attend to the commissariat from here, which our lands will not be able to stand.

'No one feels any great sympathy for the war; in the Empire they call the Imperial troops strand-snipes, and in Schleswig they won't hear anything about Germans.

'Nevertheless, one can only congratulate one's self on the fact that our troops here, as everywhere, will only be improved by the fiery ordeal. The "Reds" undermined them fearfully, and I thanked heaven when I saw ours leave in the train yesterday. I must close for to-day. More in a few days.'

My next letter from Hamburg, of the 31st of March was a description of the general opinion and situation, and shall at once be given a place here:

'I am writing to you from here, so that, if you wish to

* This small note has unfortunately been lost. My proclamation of the 24th of March: To the inhabitants of the Duchy of Coburg-Gotha ran as follows: 'A serious, fateful moment forces me, beloved fellow countrymen, to address this speech to you,' and closed: 'Fellow countrymen, although filled with emotion, yet with manly courage and the fullest confidence in the justness of the cause which I am called to serve, I leave home and hearth, and all which is nearest to my heart, to enter the ranks of your sons as a German soldier, to fight with them for Germany's honour and Germany's greatness.—Fellow Countrymen! I give you all my hand in hearty farewell—may we meet again soon—and—God willing—joyfully.'

send me any news, you will be able to find my headquarters. You will, indeed, have to refer to the map. I shall, I hope, command a brigade of about 10,000 men formed of nine contingents, in the right flank of the main body of the army. I stand in an isolated position between Eckernförde and Friedrichsort, so that, if, as we greatly wish, we come to blows, we can prevent the Danes from landing. The troops are very eager, and only the enemy is wanting.

'In Berlin, where I was yesterday, they do not wish to hear a word of the German Emperor. What is to come of it? I left everyone in transports of joy at home over the Constitution. I only arrived here a few hours ago, and it is really charming. I am well, and happy at leaving the writing-table and the home Philistines behind me.'

When I made the above communication a change had been made in the construction of my brigade. Whereas it was originally to have consisted of the Thuringian contingents, then a battery of Hessians, a Nassau battery and both Hanseatic squadrons, the battalions of Weimar and Altenburg were, strange to say, withdrawn from this connection, and replaced by a battalion of Würtembergers, and a battalion from Baden.

In my character of royal Saxon General, I requested as a disposal in that way could be made neither in Frankfort nor by the highest commanders of the army, the Saxon Ministry of War to give me for the coming campaign Colonel von Treitschke as the chief of my staff, and Captain von Fritsch, as well as Captain von Stieglitz as adjutant, to which the King of Saxony signified his assent in the most friendly manner. I knew all these officers as distinguished men, having known them when serving in the Saxon army, whose prominent military talents were as generally recognised in the course of the year, as their personal character made it possible to establish really friendly relations with them, and until death separated us I was happy in having these good comrades for friends.

Meanwhile, according to the plan of campaign, the troops of Prussia and Schleswig-Holstein were sent on before to

Schleswig and Flensburg, whilst the unimportant Imperial contingents, which were placed under my command, were stationed between Eckernförde and Friedrichsort under the name of reserve brigade.

As the Würtembergers and Badensers had not yet been added to it, the brigade was at first greatly reduced in numbers. Instructions were only sent to them by General von Prittwitz at the urgent request of my staff on the 31st of March, from Gettorf, and I had no personal knowledge of this when I left Hamburg to go straight to headquarters in order to present myself to the Commander-in-Chief of the army.

Von Prittwitz had left Gettorf for Schleswig on the 1st of April, and I met him on the evening preceding his departure, so that I had an opportunity of holding a long conversation with him. I at once complained to him of the defective arrangements which had been made by the Imperial Ministry, and freely represented to him the difficulties in which the reserve brigade might be placed.

General von Prittwitz received me coolly, and more or less ironically. He wondered greatly, he said in reply to my complaint, that I, as an Imperial General, had not received special instructions from Frankfort, and, under the impression that this had been done, he had delayed thus long to issue decided orders concerning the Thuringian contingents. The matter had now been put in order, and, according to the *ordre de bataille*, I was to take command of the reserve brigade formed by him, which, it was true, was at present very weak.

On my asking where the brigade was, he informed me that it had until then consisted only of three battalions, Gotha, Meiningen and Reusz, and one light battery from Nassau, and was to take a reserve position near Gettorf, which allowed of timely help being sent to the points Eckernförde, Friedrichsort and Kiel, in case any of them appeared to be particularly threatened. I naturally regretted that this task had been given to so small a body of troops, and he promised to send on the contingents of Baden and Würtemberg in a few days.

My displeasure was plain enough, and I noticed how incomplete everything was and that even for these few troops there was neither intendency nor infirmary. General von Prittwitz met my just grievances by beginning to complain of his own situation.

His position was a very bad and uncomfortable one, as it was clearly defined and fixed neither with regard to the non-Prussian Imperial troops nor to the Schleswig-Holstein army. General von Bonin would not obey his orders, and had not even shown him the honour of adopting the parole given by him, nor his watchword ; this could not but lead to intolerable things on every side, and would be inconvenient enough for me also, as troops from Schleswig-Holstein would be given to me.

However correct and unpleasant the facts related by von Prittwitz may have been, I still could not admit that the position assigned to me was strictly necessary. The isolated and retired post to which the troops were ordered appeared to me during the whole campaign to have been given them in order to keep them unoccupied.

I could not admit, and said so plainly, that the Danish army which was assembling in the North of Schleswig would divide in such a way as to undertake important operations in the South. But if such a thing could really be expected, I must admit that a task was set the Imperial troops under my command which, according to the nature of the case, and the geographical position of the points assigned to me to defend, was one which could hardly be performed with so insignificant a number of forces.

General von Prittwitz admitted that my position might become very important and difficult, but, he added, with the immense irony which he showed at every mention of the reserve brigade, a great task had willingly been assigned to me and the Imperial troops so that we might prove our ability and skill to the whole world. In the course of his half serious, but always very obligingly turned conversation, he let fall the remark that the first shot in the war would probably be fired by us.

This observation was at that moment as incomprehensible to me, as it appeared strange and remarkable after the lapse of four days. Did von Prittwitz know what awaited us in our position near Eckernförde? And had he wrapped himself up in a mystery which might become very pregnant for us?

At any rate, the whole conversation showed plainly that the Prussian General had for once measured the Imperial troops with a particular measure. I only sought clearly to understand my position politically, when I asked for the necessary instructions with regard to my affairs for the government of the country and the War Department of Schleswig-Holstein. In this, the Commander-in-Chief explained to me, I was to do as I liked, to negotiate and communicate immediately with the Government in all matters concerning the country.

As regarded the garrisons of Kiel, Eckernförde and Friedrichsort, they were to be composed of Schleswig reserve troops, and it was self-understood that they must be placed under my command; but the opinion of the War Department and the chief command was very divided on the subject of the position of the Schleswig-Holstein army.

Thus ended my conversation with the General-in-Chief, which gave me but little satisfaction and hope for the future, as I had a feeling that there were secrets, confusing orders and uncertain aims here, and that the goblin which went with the peasant from the burnt house into the newly-built one, had, in politics, only exchanged diplomatic chanceries for the camp.

On the following day, the 2nd of April, I rode from Schleswig to Gettorf, where I personally assumed command of the troops, and established my headquarters. The Imperial troops had until then formed the advance guard, and had now returned to the cantonments of the reserve position.

It was Monday in Easter week.

On Tuesday the 3rd the Danes were to open hostilities by land and water, and I tried to employ the next few days in the best way, in reconnoitering the positions and inspecting Eckernförde, Kiel and Friedrichsort.

Many measures for defence had, it is true, been taken by the Government of Schleswig-Holstein, but they had all turned out to be insufficient. The troops stationed at the above named places were all recruits, without exception. As regarded local arrangements, the principal places were connected with one another, as well as with Gettorf and the fortress of Rendsburg, which, under any circumstances, offered a certain rear defence, by very good roads, but on the whole the ground which was occupied by the reserve brigade, presented great difficulties for military evolutions.

Woods and boggy stretches, between which every bit of ground, however small, had been carefully cultivated, alternate with one another here. Numberless ditches and dams, overgrown with different kinds of shrubs, as well as carefully tended hedges and fences to mark off the limits of the various properties, extend through the country. These land arrangements rendered the movements of larger bodies of troops very difficult; even the infantry had great trouble in passing through the strips of field enclosed by dams and ditches, which are called 'enclosures' here; the cavalry and artillery had to be kept entirely to the made road.

The formation of the coast was remarkably favourable to any attempts to land on the part of the Danes, for the many wooded bays and necks of land would have required a far larger force than mine, if all points were to be assured.

The quartering too was attended by great difficulties, with regard to the keeping of discipline as well as quick alarm and assembling, the townships are isolated and the farms scattered through the country. The assembling of a battalion, notwithstanding the fact that whole companies could often find room in a single farm, often took two hours, or longer.

In Eckernförde, and thence southwards, in the Danish wold, the inhabitants, whose solid, healthy and amiable natures one learned to appreciate more and more every day, were devoted, body and soul, to the German cause. They considered the war to be carried on in their interest, and made the sacrifice with glad courage, great as it might be.

Northwards from Eckernförde, on the contrary, in Schwansen

and Angeln, on the shores of the Schlie, they were less devoted to the German cause, and the Danes had many friends there amongst the inhabitants of the country, and particularly amongst the sailors, who acted as spies to a great degree, and furnished the Danish ships with minute information.

Regarding the means of defence which I found, I think it right to quote here from the military documents which my adjutant, Captain von Stieglitz, afterwards collected as a summary of the whole, as delusions are not wanting concerning the events which are now to be related, which took place on the coast of Eckernförde, the question being how far the Schleswig-Holsteiners would have been able to stand alone against the Danes. I therefore consider that I am acting impartially when I introduce the cut and dried words of the military description:

1. Eckernförde. The bay of Eckernförde was defended by two shore batteries, the North and South battery. The first is near Louisenberg, at about twenty minutes' distance from Eckernförde. It was armed with two 64 lb. iron mortars, two 24 lb. iron cannons, two 18 lb. iron cannons, for which forty Schleswig-Holstein artillerymen were told off.

The South battery lies from 500 to 600 paces before the town, and was furnished with 18 lb. iron cannons, with thirty Schleswig-Holstein artillerymen for service. Captain Jungmann, formerly in the royal Prussian service, later an instructor in the Turkish army, only having returned from his post a few weeks before, commanded this battery, which, after the withdrawal of a company despatched to Friedrichsort, was about 600 men strong. They were almost all recruits, and most of them had only one officer per company.

The Schleswig-Holstein Captain Wiegand fulfilled the duties of commander of the town soldiery, his sphere of activity being that of an etappier captain. Every commander acted as he thought fit, there was no point of union in the command.

2. Friedrichsort. In this fortress twenty pieces of ordnance had been placed on the platforms, most of them 24 lb iron cannons, with four 80 lb iron mortars. The garrison consisted

of the company already mentioned, the 3rd Schleswig-Holstein reserve battalion and a barely sufficient number of cannoniers. The royal Prussian Captain von Thoschesky was in command of the fort.

Opposite Friedrichsort, on the north eastern coast of the bay near Laboe, there was an open redoubt, armed by four 18 lb iron cannons, to cover which a company of the reserve corps of Chasseurs stationed at Kiel lay in the neighbouring district. Laboe formed a detached fort for Friedrichsort.

3. Kiel. A Schleswig-Holstein corps of Chasseurs, 1000 men strong, was stationed here commanded by Major von Redemann of Schleswig-Holstein.

Lieutenant-Colonel Jeska was in command of the town soldiers in Kiel, as Captain Wiegand was in Eckernförde.

In Kiel harbour lay the man-of-war 'Bonin,' with six cannons, as well as six equipped gun boats, each bearing two pieces of ordnance. These ships were under the control of the so-called Marine Commission, the chief of which was Engineer Major Jesz. This Marine Commission had set up a shore battery, armed and furnished with four pieces of ordnance, near Düsternbruch, twenty minutes from Kiel in the direction of Friedrichsort on the western side of the bay. The position and arrangement looked as if they had been done in sport.

Finally, in Rendsburg there was the royal Prussian Major Schmidt, commander of the fortress, with the Schleswig-Holstein Major Knobbe as commander of the town. The garrison, which often varied in strength, consisted for the most part of men from the Schleswig-Holstein reserve corps, commanded by Colonel von Fabricius—staff Itzehoe—mostly recruits.

The reserve brigade when I assumed command on the 2nd of April consisted of:—

One battalion Meiningen, Colonel von Buch, and as assigned staff officer, the hereditary Prince of Meiningen, 731 men, quartered at Alt and New Wittenbeck. One battalion Gotha, Major von Brandstein, 758 men, quartered in and around Gettorf.

One battalion Reuss, Colonel von Heningen, 560 men, quartered in and around Eckernförde.

One battery Nassau, Captain Müller.

If, in Hamburg, I assessed the troops which would be at my disposal at the number of 10,000 men, as will be remembered from the letter to my brother, on my arrival in Schleswig these expectations dwindled down greatly. Reckoning everything together, I found myself in my headquarters at Gettorf, according to the above lists, at the head of 3815 infantrymen, 370 artillerymen and forty cannons, to which, according to the *ordre de bataille* the Schleswig-Holstein contingent was to have been added, but to whom it was first necessary to make the fact clear that they really belonged to the reserve brigade, and were under my command.

It must be admitted, that more modest means could not have easily fulfilled a task in the war, and it needed a strong belief in my lucky star, if, rightly understanding the utterances of General von Prittwitz, I thought that the reserve brigade might possibly be intended to fire the first shot. Whatever this mysterious hint might mean, it was clear to me that the greatest watchfulness was necessary here, and a careful supply of information.

In the year 1848 an optical telegraph line had been raised for the purpose of furnishing quick news, extending from the district of Schwansen, near Waabs, through Eckernförde, Gettorf to Kiel, and thence to Schönberg into Holstein, the central point of which was formed by the town of Gettorf.

An inhabitant of this place, the master-joiner Callsen, was deserving of a reward for having raised this telegraphic point, which was of incalculable value to me, and which I therefore had improved in every way. Callsen had raised a scaffold 80 feet high on the already lofty tower, so that, with a good telescope, one could easily watch the sea as far as Alsen. In doing this Callsen had had difficulties to contend with which again threw a vivid light on the state of things in Schleswig-Holstein; for the patron of the church at Gettorf was the Grand Master of the forests von Ahlefeld, who, like many other noblemen in that district looked upon the

Holstein agitation as being nothing else than a republican insurrection, and regarded the proceedings with great disfavour.

It was pretended that church and tower were endangered by the scaffolding, and a kind of private war thus arose concerning the telegraph station, to put an end to which was the first object of my endeavours. Meanwhile the telegraph fulfilled its purpose, and the news gained by this means made it possible for us to raise a timely opposition to the Danes' attempts to land.

Our watchfulness was only too soon to be put to the proof. When I returned on the 4th of April, towards evening, from Friedrichsort to Gettorf, Herr Callsen surprised me with the news that a considerably large Danish squadron was steering from Alsen for the Bay of Kiel,—he had recognised the ship of the line, *Christian VIII*, and counted at least nine sails besides. The frigate *Gefion*, commanded by Captain Meyer, with forty-eight cannons, had been blockading the harbours of Kiel and Eckernförde since the 3rd of April. A considerable sea force had therefore been collected here, so that I could not doubt for a moment that they intended to land.

An attempt was afterwards made to assert that the Danes had simply intended to make a demonstration, in order to prevent the Prussian troops from marching forward, and to be able the better to execute a forward movement against the Schleswig-Holstein army in the North.

But against the supposition of such a low manœuvre we have the assertions of Commander Paludan, in the court-martial inquiry made by the Danes into the events which occurred at Eckernförde.

My conviction that a serious attack was intended was thoroughly confirmed by the communications meantime received, which were unanimous on all sides, and very detailed.*

* In the court-martial Danish notes of the affair, Captain Paludan is reminded that the instructions given him previously, according to which he was to land, or at least to destroy the fortifications near Eckernförde, were countermanded on the 4th or the 5th, because the attack at Sundewitt, which was to have taken place at the same time, was not made. As Paludan explained that this order had not reached him, it is a sufficient proof that the affairs of Eckernförde can only be judged according to the first instructions, and may therefore be regarded as really offensive, not as a demonstrative operation.

After nine o'clock the first news arrived from the commander of Friedrichsort, Captain von Thoschesky, and ran as follows:

'The Commander of Friedrichsort has the honour of obediently informing Your Highness that to-day, towards evening, nine hostile men-of-war anchored to the south of the Schlei on the Schleswig shore, namely, one frigate, one cutter brig, two corvettes, two steamers, three gun boats, two transport vessels. A landing seems to be contemplated. But there is such a wind that, as long as it lasts, they will not very well be able to accomplish it on the Schleswig coast, this side of Noer. Inside the Eckernförde harbour, however, on the other side of Noer, it is even now possible.'

Other news, sometimes exactly similar, sometimes supplementary, arrived from the commanders of the Reusz battalion, of the battery at Laboe, of the commander of the outposts at Noer, also from Prince Frederick's secretary from Noer Castle and from Major Jesz commander of Kiel. According to them it might certainly be expected that the powerful *Christian VIII* and, in any case, a number of transports with troops for landing were amongst the men-of-war. At eleven o'clock at night the following orders were accordingly issued; the Reusz battalion to remain at Eckernförde, whence two companies of the Schleswig-Holstein reserve battalion stationed there go off to cover the north battery. The Coburg-Gotha battalion moves to the shore by the Schnellmark wood, followed by the Nassau battery, and the Meiningen battalion marches to Gettorf, partly as a reserve for the Eckernförde position, partly to return to Kiel at once in case that town should be attacked.

Colonel von Treitschke had meantime ridden with my adjutant von Stieglitz to the coast towards Aschau in order to convince himself personally of the truth of the information. He could plainly see the fleet lying at anchor in the moonlight, and as the landing was to be expected early in the morning I set out at midnight with my battalion, and, after it had taken up its position at three o'clock in the morning, went to Eckernförde as far as the north battery, where I found Captain Jungmann who was preparing for battle and

to whom I gave all necessary instructions. As was afterwards learned from the documents furnished by Captain Paludan, and which are now known to everyone, he had orders and the real intention of affecting a landing of the Danish troops at three o'clock in the morning. This did not take place because Paludan who was furnished with complete information from the Schleswig coast had been told of our night march.

At break of day it was therefore thought that the Danes wished to avoid a fight and the man-of-war would withdraw.

When, at dawn, we began to see the fleet more plainly, several ships were beginning to move off and we thought we had nothing more to fear for Eckernförde. I had gone from the north battery to the shore of Eckernförde where I wished to remain some time, until the departure of the ships became a certainty. Only then could orders be given for the troops to return to their cantonments.

But things were to happen otherwise. Suddenly we saw the line ship *Christian*, the frigate *Gefion* and the two steamers *Geiser* and *Hecla* approach the shore. We could not doubt that the fleet was beginning a movement of attack on the north battery in Eckernförde harbour. At half-past seven the ships had arrived within range, and the first cannon shot came from the north battery which was at once answered by a murderous fire from the four ships, which together had no less than 156 guns.

In the north battery, which it was plainly intended to destroy at once, Captain Jungmann, with his unschooled artillerymen, really performed wonders, and they fired at the ships with the greatest sureness and calmness.

Meantime Captain Wheeler had a really good position in the Schnellmark wood with four cannons, and for at least an hour they rendered powerful aid to the north battery from this spot.

One of the two steamers, the *Geiser* had approached so near within range that she was soon much damaged, having to put out to sea, and doing but very little service. The Nassau battery suffered no losses, nor did the Gotha battalion,

stationed under cover, as the grape-shot fell short, and the balls and grenades passed too high over them.

But the north battery had suffered severely from the incessant fire of the ship-of-the-line and the frigate, and had already been reduced to silence.

But I will leave the further progress of the fight and my immediate part in the battle to be described by the report furnished by Colonel von Treitschke to the Saxon Ministry:—

The details of Colonel von Treitschke's unprinted report are so accurately completed and confirmed by the *résumé* of the Danish court-martial, that I place both documents side by side here, for comparison. It will be seen from these reports that the part taken by the reserve brigade is at times undervalued; and although I am at this date far from depreciating the extraordinary performances of Captain von Jungmann and the non-commissioned officer Preuszer, yet it is true that in most descriptions Captain Müller does not receive anything like honourable mention enough. The court-martial report portrays the course of the fight from the above-mentioned moment, as follows:

'According to Captain Paludan's plan, the ship-of-the-line lay 850 ells from Battery B. (South Battery), 1850 ells from Battery A. (North Battery), and remained within this distance during the whole affair. Some of the declarations made during the examination meantime show that the ship had sunk somewhat.

'With the frigate came Captain Meyer, to whom Commander Paludan had left the choice of anchoring sheer of the deck in the ward of the great anchor, or with a warp anchor from behind, within a quarter of an hour after the line ship had taken her station, on the spot before the anchored ship of the line which was assigned to him with a cable let down from the larboard side, securely fastened to the ward of the common anchor, and thirty fathoms of chain fastened to the main-bits.

'The frigate then opened a lively fire from both sides against the batteries. Battery A was silenced in a short time, so that from 8.15 o'clock, until towards 11 o'clock only single shots were fired. As, meantime, the firing had almost entirely ceased, firing against the ships was begun on the North side from some bits of field which were occupied behind a thicket north of A. Battery B, the firing

from which was particularly directed against the frigate, could not be reduced to silence, although it was heavily bombarded.

'After, as far as can be gathered from the various declarations made, a lively fire had been kept up during half or three-quarters of an hour, the frigate *Geiser* drifted from her position and swayed before the wind, with her stern towards Battery B, which fired at her whole length, causing great loss, whilst the frigate was reduced to using her stern guns only. An attempt was at once made to turn her by hauling in the kedge and drawing in the iron cable, of which as much as 50 fathoms were stretched as far as the main bits. But it was impossible to bring the frigate back to her former position, and in order to prevent her from driving into the line ship, the toy anchor was lowered, upon which, according to the log of the *Geiser*, it was signalled to this steamer that it would help if they could turn the stern of the frigate so far against the wind that it would be possible to lower a warf anchor.

'Lieutenant Captain Wulff immediately started with the steamer named for the frigate, being heavily bombarded on the way by Battery B, caught the towing-cable from her stern in order to turn her, but, as the cable broke, or was cut in two by a shot, the attempt had to be abandoned for a time, but was renewed at 8.45 o'clock, and only given up finally, as it was thought that further help was not necessary, upon which the steamer returned to her position south-east of Battery B, *whence she fired at the battery as well as at cannons which were meantime being run out at the southern side of Battery B.* They succeeded, indeed, after the space of about half-an-hour, in turning the frigate, but she had meantime been heavily damaged by the fire directed against her whole length, only being able to retort weakly with her stern guns, by which one of the cannons in the redoubt was dismounted, and the breaches and long tackle of the larboard battery cannons were shot away.

'At 10 o'clock there were numbers of dead and wounded on board the frigate, whereas the line ship had not suffered much. The masts and tackling of the frigate were much damaged as the fight went on. The considerable damage done to the frigate and the harassed position in which she lay, farther, as it could not be expected that they would succeed in dismounting Battery B, as *at the same time considerable masses of troops were to be seen on all parts of the coast, where field batteries were also being stationed, and had begun firing from different points at the ships*, Commander Paludan

found, after an uninterrupted fight of two hours, that it would be necessary to move the ship out of range. The line ship signalled towards 10 o'clock to the steamer *Hecla* to approach and take her in tow; but as the steamer crossed in front of the line ship, she received a shot from both sides in her rudder, above water-mark, so that both the stern and the hold of the rudder were completely shot away, and Captain Aschlund was forced to draw off out of range, and steer southwards, in order to lie at anchor and repair the damages.

'As Commander Captain Paludan assumed that it would be possible to bring the man-of-war out by means of wraps, etc.

'The manœuvres made towards this end have been further described in the war report; as, however, the attempts met with no success, the *Hecla* and *Geiser* were twice ordered, after the repairing of their damages, to tow out the ships. The *Geiser* received a shot in the machine room, towards 10 o'clock the *Hecla* made a new attempt but turned, as Battery A again became active. Captain Aschlund afterwards referred to the fact that he had for many years commanded towing ships, and, apart from the damage which the *Hecla* had received in her rudder, that he could not but regard it as an impossibility to bring the man-of-war out of range in the face of a topsail gale. In the court-martial inquiry very different opinions were given as to whether the *Hecla* could not, nevertheless, have afforded help. The court-martial inquiry lays all the blame of the continuance of the catastrophe on the *Hecla*. Immediately after the renewal of the fight, the frigate recognised her inability to continue the struggle, and it was then considered whether the ship was to be sunk, which was not done, as the line ship would have been definitely hindered thereby from withdrawing from the battle, as the frigate could hardly have got free of the line ship.

'I will only generally remark at the close, that the shots which had made the steamers unfit for service, had, in all probability, come from the field batteries. At any rate, it may be seen from the court-martial report that *Herr von Treitschke really made his report to the Saxon War Ministry with the greatest objectiveness and without any prepossession whatever for the body of troops under my immediate command.*'

'Towards ten o'clock the two guns sent from the Nassau battery were taken to another point than that which had at

first been intended, being placed between the town and the north battery, and began to fire at the ship-of-the-line, which now levelled her own battery at them, although owing to the great distance and the small calibre of her guns, she was able to do no damage whatever. A very fortunate result for the north battery, which took advantage of the half-hour of quiet to repair three damaged guns.

'After nearly four hours of continuous fighting the ship-of-the-line turned more towards the south battery, thus nearing the town until only about 600 paces off; the *Gefion* followed, and both now began to storm the south battery and the town with all kinds of shot.

'At this moment, when the landing appeared possible, the brigadier-general himself, accompanied only by Adjutant Captain von Stieglitz, led the Reusz battalion, part of which had been stationed behind the town, into the hottest fire, behind the dikes which extended along the shore, which position this battalion retained until the end of the fight.

'At the Windmill of Borby, near the town, where the brigadier-general remained until the end of the fight, he was recognised from the ships, as was afterwards learned from captured officers, and hotly fired at, with his suite, upon which he went to the troops on the south shore, which however could only be reached by taking a long roundabout way, as the roads leading straight to the shore could not be entered, owing to the murderous fire.

'The bombardment lasted uninterruptedly until past one o'clock, but it could already be observed that the ships, which had entered too far into the harbour, and were difficult to withdraw, owing to the strong east wind, were at a disadvantage. The white flag was then hoisted on the ship-of-the-line.

'A proposal was then sent by the commander of the flotilla, Captain Paludan, to the commander of the Schleswig artillery, through an officer who was to negotiate the truce, to allow the free withdrawal of the ships, else the town would be fired, and the responsibility would be laid to the commander on our side. The reply was: The bombardment of a defenceless town was contrary to the rights of the people, the responsi-

bility would therefore rest with the Danish commander. The firing would begin again shortly, and would last until there was not a bullet left.

'The armistice was most welcome to us, giving the shore battery time to prepare for further fighting, and affording the commander of the brigade time to establish communication with the town, and, having entirely agreed as to the continuation of the fight, to decide upon the necessary co-operation.

'This could only consist in making the battery take up a position on the shore, near the southern exit of the town of Eckernförde, whence it could become very dangerous to the ships.

'The decision was difficult, for although the critical position of the Danish ships was recognised, it could not be depended upon to last long.

'The battery was obliged to move towards the shore for the most part without being under cover, and could only avail itself of a side road for a little distance; should the fire of our shore batteries begin too soon, or the Danes lower the white flag, the battery would suffer terribly, and probably be unable to reach the intended position.

'Meanwhile we had had great good luck; something could be dared, so the decision was arrived at, and turned out well for us.

'The commander of the Nassau battery, Captain Müller, performed his task with the greatest determination, reached the town safely, rode to the dike, had it cleared as much as was necessary, sent the horses behind the houses, and now stood at a distance of about 450 paces opposite the line-ship's broadside. He had hardly made these preparations before the firing from the batteries was again begun, after four o'clock.

'The Nassau battery first of all cleared the deck and masts of the ship-of-the-line with canister-shot, she having, after sending broadsides at the battery, striven to go further from the shore, but, her sails and masts being shot to pieces, she only succeeded in moving off a few hundred paces, then stuck fast, and was only more exposed to the fire of all three batteries.

'The frigate had taken up so unfortunate a position that she offered her stern to the north battery, and received many shots along her full length; she no longer took part in the fight, after the towing cable, with which the steamer tried to draw her off, was shot away, and the latter was obliged by the damages received to put out to sea.'

So much for the report of the head of my general staff concerning the sea fight which turned out to be so unlucky and so bloody for the Danes. What personal recollections of these exciting hours I could add, will be seen from the letters which I wrote to my relations in England immediately afterwards, and which I will reproduce later on.

Let the end of the Eckernförde affair be described in a few words from memory: It was half-past six o'clock when information was brought from the Nassau brigade that Captain Paludan desired to capitulate, after the *Christian VIII* had already struck her flag and the firing had consequently ceased on all sides. When I reached the shore, very near the south battery, a crowd consisting of hundreds of jubilant people had streamed out of the town and flocked to the heights surrounding the harbour. Everyone was so excited and so full of deep emotion that it was difficult to give cautious and practical orders. Soldiers and citizens wept and rejoiced together. When I came to the Nassau battery, brave Captain Müller was so unmanned that he forgot all military regulations and fell on my neck.

When the crews of both ships were brought to land in boats, a process which was very slow, owing to the want of proper crafts, it had grown very dark, and it was noticed that the ship-of-the-line was on fire. It was impossible to do anything to save her, and I was reduced to helping the crews and wounded belonging to the ships as far as lay in my power. Besides, no one was quite certain whose orders were to be obeyed, as town and naval authorities, as well as the commanders of the Eckernförde troops issued all sorts of orders in great confusion.

What measures I was able to succeed in having carried out were owing more to my personal influence than to my

military command. Meantime, to ensure order outside, I made several detachments of the Reusz battalion deploy on the shore. Later in the night, after the unavoidable catastrophe to the ship-of-the-line, part of these troops were taken on board the frigate *Gefion*, in order to ensure the possession of the ship as far as was possible.*

Meanwhile, I returned to the town, and sent for Commander Captain Paludan, as well as Captain Meyer, to come to my quarters, where they soon appeared accompanied by their adjutants, and handed me their swords. I invited the gentlemen to tea, and the next day returned the weapons to the unfortunate captains.

I cannot say that the description of Paludan after the lost battle, was very correct, which makes him appear in the light of a broken man, deeply humiliated. I was much more astonished at the indifference with which the Danes accepted their defeat, or, at least, the appearance of such. They seemed to regard the matter as an elementary occurrence and to console themselves as Schiller's King Philip did for the destruction of the Invincible Armada.†

Nevertheless, apart from the loss of their best ships, the defeat of the Danes was terrible enough, as they had lost so large a number of their best seamen and crews.

The boats were obliged to make endless trips to the ships, in order to bring the crowding sailors and soldiers to land, 44 officers and 981 men were counted, saved with all their effects and property. But there were still many men on board the *Christian VIII*, when the fire was seen breaking out of all parts of the ship. Suddenly several cannons on board went off, and soon a frightful explosion resounded, and a mighty pillar of fire shot up to the sky. Wood and pieces of iron, the ruins of a ship, as well as guns and pieces of ordnance, flew into the air like balls, and the next moment the shore and the swelling sea were covered with them. It was a

* In the notes supplied by Prince Frederick von Noer, the affair of Eckernförde is regarded in a manner which may be called anything but friendly and correct.

† As we had no ships, the defence of the war frigate which had been seized was on the eventful attack of the Danes, the affair, as before, of the land army and the strand batteries, and our dispositions during the days following the battle, were made to this effect.

wonder that, of all the people crowding in the harbour and looking on at the sight, not a single one was killed. Thousands of tongues of flame lighted the moving scene; glowing cannon-balls strewed the shore, side by side with burning beams and all kinds of things. Exploding grenades burst and thundered, and cartridges went off. When the noise began to subside, we could hear the terrible cries of the crews for help, as they fought the last fight of that fearful day with the waves.

Amongst the many victims to the catastrophe was the Danish Lieutenant Kreiger, and on our side the brave commander of the south battery, Sergeant Preuszer, whose fate has so often been described and deplored. But his death was the consequence of the want of military discipline; for Preuszer had gone on board the *Christian VIII* without any order or permission, and is said to have given the most mistaken directions there. He had, it was asserted, had the already opened water-cocks shut again, and prevented the throwing overboard of the ammunition. One may indeed call tragic the fate of a man who, in the triumph of an unheard of victory, paid for his arbitrariness with his life.

The remarkable fate of a Norwegian who took part in the Danish Naval Campaign as a volunteer and was saved in a wonderful manner, is less known. He was naval lieutenant, Count Wedel Jarlsberg, who had been taken prisoner as Paludan's adjutant, and had consequently made his appearance in his train. Shortly after he arrived he asked permission to be allowed to return to the ship, in order to fetch some papers of Captain Paludan's which had been forgotten in the hurry. I gave my consent unwillingly, but granted the Count's wish, as he gave his solemn promise by shaking hands, to attempt nothing hostile on board the ship, and to return. Captain von Fritsch and Captain Stieglitz accompanied him to the shore, and very unwillingly refrained from entering the fishing boat with their prisoner, which he had rowed to the burning ship as quickly as possible. The next instant there was an explosion; the courageous man was supposed to be killed and buried in the waves.

I was awakened in the night, and there stood the chivalric officer, dripping wet, before me, announcing that he had returned. He had been blown far out to sea by the explosion, without, however, receiving any injury. Being a good swimmer he managed to reach land; he had kept his word as a man of honour, and gave himself up again as a prisoner. Twenty years afterwards, on the day of my Jubilee in Gotha, in January 1869, a somewhat grey Swedish Admiral came to me, having, he told me, made the long journey in remembrance of the 5th of April of the year 1849 in order to bring me his hearty congratulations. It was Wedel Jarlsberg, now one of the most prominent and considered persons in the Swedish marine. On that day, twenty years before, he had received his baptism of fire and gone through his trial by water like a brave seaman.

The battle of Eckernförde was, according to the unanimous judgment of all experienced men, if not one of the greatest, yet one of the rarest and most remarkable occurrences known in the history of war. As will be understood, extraordinary good luck was necessary to help to attain such a success. As, however, the fact was given and the event had occurred, which occupied the minds of men in an unusual manner, the political effect was a most extraordinary one.

When one compared the numberless newspapers in Germany which celebrated the victory of Eckernförde at Easter, with the indifferent feeling which was prevalent before the breaking out of the war with regard to this complicated, and as it were fatal, Northern affair, one may rightly assert that the battle of Eckernförde not only unchained the seamanlike fancy of the Germans, but that it really made the war against Denmark popular. Countless were the poems and dedications which reached me daily, and even amongst Englishmen, to whom the event appeared to offer a relative interest, as it were, something like sympathy and approval made itself felt for us Germans. I do not think that I have ever over-estimated my share, in the accomplishment of the affair and the success, but the event itself could not very well be estimated too highly. What I wrote to my brother concerning it, may perhaps possess

a degree of authentic value, and should therefore be given room here:

'*Gettorf, April* 6, 1849.

'Although I suppose that you have already had indirect information of our brilliant warlike deed, I will not fail to inform you of it in a few lines. The bearer of this is the Holstein Baron von Heinze, a member of the Government, who is patriotic enough to go to England in order to carry you this official intelligence. Reaching here a few days ago, to form my corps, I received news in the evening of the 4th that a Danish flotilla was in sight near Eckernförde.

'I made all preparations for defence, but we were only attacked the next morning at half-past seven o'clock. The fire was opened upon the town and the two batteries at the same time. We were valiant, and injured the steamers so severely that after the lapse of two hours they were obliged to leave the harbour. The two brigs soon followed, one of them visibly on fire from the lighted bombs which I caused to be fired.

'Towards twelve o'clock the Admiral's ship and the frigate lay-to 400 paces in front of the town and one of the batteries. Everything was now done to prevent a landing, and we succeeded. I myself was for two hours under grape-shot fire. At half-past one o'clock the ships ceased firing, raised the white flag and sent a truce officer, who made the request that I should cease firing, and the ships would leave the harbour. I demanded unconditional surrender, which was not accepted. Instead, a truce of two hours, at four o'clock a frightful fire began again.

'During the time of rest I succeeded in placing four guns of the Nassau battery behind a sand bank close in front of the ships. It did fearful damage, and killed half the men serving the guns. After six o'clock both ships surrendered.

'May this be the first and last feat of arms in this war, which is destroying the beautiful country, and cannot give the Danes a single clod back. The patriotism here is immense. I think that you will be able to do a great deal towards giving us peace. Yours, etc. ERNEST.'

'I have received your letter from Hamburg,' answered Prince Albert on the 10th of April, 'in which you announced your departure for your brigade, and two days later, that is, yesterday, the news of a great victory under the most remarkable circumstances. You are a child of fortune, and remind me of a hunter who goes out to shoot snipe, and into whose hands falls a stag with fourteen branches. Nothing luckier could happen, and the loss of the ships may make Denmark readier to listen to reason and agree to a peace which is necessary both to her and to Germany.'

It may easily be understood that in Schleswig-Holstein much greater war-like hopes were cherished after so brilliant a beginning than were entertained by my brother and me in the above letters. Not an immediate peace was expected from this, but the energetic and thorough humbling of the Danes.* It is with this view that most of the official reports

* It cannot but be of interest to the reader to become acquainted here with the conception of the Schleswig-Holstein Government, and I will therefore by way of illustration insert some portions of reports which may serve to complete our representations. Schleiden writes thus: 'I can now speak from personal observation, as I arrived at Eckernförde with Dr Lorenzen during the short truce. The Nassau battery drove somewhat northwards from our south battery, behind the Christian Hospital and, as the line ship, in spite of the refusal, did not strike the white flag, but made preparations to change her position, began firing, Dr Lorenzen and I, being exactly between the Nassau and the south batteries, had trouble in getting behind the hospital, into which a ball fell at the same moment. The stones crashed down close behind us. Dr Lorenzen kept his place there during the whole cannonade. I fled, somewhat sheltered from grape shot by the churchyard wall, into the town, and watched the remainder of the fight from the heights of Borby. The firing, which was rather lively at the first soon grew weaker, and after I had seen the fourth ball strike the ship, she struck the flag at 6 o'clock. A general "hurrah!" greeted this moment, yet we hardly dared hope at first that this was a sign of surrender. The frigate had not fired during the second struggle. When we returned to the shore and got near the batteries, we heard from the lips of the Duke of Gotha, who was received with a joyful "*Hoch!*" that both ships had surrendered at discretion. The disembarkation of the crew of the line ship at once began, and from the first, sailors, who had already jumped into the water at a considerable distance from the shore, in order to let the boats go back, we learned that the ship was burning, a glowing bomb had set her on fire. Others pretended that she was burning in three different places. Paludan's adjutant swore solemnly that the ship had not been set on fire by the Danes. The Duke stood a rain of bullets which lasted for two hours, and a horse was shot under him. He was very much pleased at the success. Our loss consists of one dead, five slightly wounded, two horses belonging to the Nassau battery. Besides these, a Reusz soldier was killed, and a sick woman in bed in the hospital. Many roofs in the town have had holes shot into them, but the threat to set fire to it was not carried out.' . . . .

In a later letter the losses of the Danes are mentioned, and this information deserves some mention, although, in our reports, lesser numbers are given. 'To-day we have the dark side of yesterday's brilliant picture. We know now that about 200 men were blown into the air with the ship-of-the-line, amongst them twelve of the thirty-five superior officers, namely, Lieutenant-Captains Krieger and Marstrand, etc., . . . the doctors Smith and Ibsen. The saddest of all, was that our brave

of the Eckernförde affair made by the authorities were drawn up to be sent to their foreign Chargés d' Affaires. Nevertheless in a similar document addressed to Samwers in London, there is the following dejected admission: 'A great event such as yesterday's was necessary to prevent our losing courage at the bad news from Berlin.'

artillery sergeant Preuszer, who commanded the south battery with Steindl, and to whom the post of honour was assigned on the ship, was also blown up; a Norwegian volunteer, Lieutenant Wedel Jarlsberg sprang, at the moment of the explosion into the water, and saved himself, only being injured in the shoulder by a falling plank, by swimming to land. The results of the explosion appear to have been frightful. Half corpses and single limbs are said to be lying about. It is not improbable that part of the unfortunate crew had hidden through fear, for, as has now been proved, it was not so much the shattered condition of the frigate as the terror of the unaccustomed crew, who, during the last hours, were not to be brought near the cannons, even by force, which led to the surrender of the frigate. And, indeed, the balls made fearful havoc, forty, sixty, some say even one hundred and twenty, dead and wounded on board the frigate, which is said to be pierced through and through her whole length by shots. The inner spaces present, as Harbon, who has seen them, tells me, a fearful spectacle. The ship-of-the-line is said to have received sixteen shots in her stern from the Nassau battery, each of which, reckoned one with the other, overthrew three men. During the night, the frigate was brought into the inner harbour. Captain Donner arrived at 2 o'clock with about two hundred sailors. The ship will be to some degree repaired in about fourteen days, and would then be fit to serve as a battery, should the Danes make an attempt to fetch the frigate away again. Both steamers are still lying before the harbour, and have twice sent a truce boat to inquire concerning the fate of those on board the *Christian VIII*, and particularly after a son of their chief commander, of the Cadet Guard, who was saved. The prisoners of war, 1023 men according to the statement of the commander, among them forty-four of higher grade, have been taken to Rendsburg to-day.

'The affair of Eckernförde naturally absorbs all other interest; a proclamation appeared to-day to celebrate the occasion, etc. SCHLEIDEN.

'*Schleswig, April 6th*, 1849.'

## CHAPTER IV

RESIGNATION OF ARMISTICE GOVERNMENT IN THE DUCHIES.—A GOVERNMENT OF STADTHOLDERS.—POPULAR RISING IN SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN.—CHARACTER OF PRINCE VON NOER.—AN ENGLISH MAN-OF-WAR FIRED UPON.—DEMAND FOR REPARATION.—THE AFFAIR PLEASANTLY CONCLUDED.—LETTER TO PRINCE ALBERT.—PRINCE ALBERT'S OPINIONS AS TO FAILURE OF NEGOTIATIONS FOR PEACE.—CAPTAIN SCHWARTZ AND HIS PAY.—A RUSSIAN LANDING FEARED.—ARRIVAL OF THE DUCHESS AT GETTORF.—DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PRITTWITZ AND BONIN.—THE STORMING OF KOLDING.—ACTIVITY OF THE DANES.—PRITTWITZ HANGS BACK.—HIS LETTER.—EMBARKATION OF THE DANES.—THE AFFAIR OF FREDERICIA.—BUNSEN'S ACTION.—LETTER FROM COUNTESS REVENTLOW.—SYMPATHIES OF QUEEN VICTORIA.—THE BERLIN ARMISTICE AGREEMENT: THE PROTOCOL.

When I had gone to Holstein to assume my command, I received news from Hamburg, that the armistice Government in the Duchies had resigned. A Government of Stadtholders had been substituted for it by the Imperial Central Power, which was to consist of three men.

Beseler had, through his relations in Frankfort, succeeded in obtaining that not only he and Count Reventlow were appointed Stadtholders, but that the choice of their third colleague should be left to them. Nothing was more significant of the state into which things had fallen in Germany, than that neither could the two Stadtholders agree about their third man, nor was the Central Power sufficiently strong or respected to complete the Government without the consent of the two men in power.

One must by no means think that this admittedly strange situation of the Government of the country was accepted in

patriotic silence in the Duchies. I found, on the contrary, as the war soon gave me time to make such observations, the country split up into rough parties, complete disunion everywhere amongst the leading men, and sometimes the most detestable quarrels between the nobility and the people. Greatly as, regarding Denmark, the mutual possession with Germany was harped upon, there was all the less inclination for obedience here, all the less need for the unity of the Kingdom.

There was little thought of resigning any particular rights to the Central Power. As regarded simple individuals in the towns and particularly in literary circles, one might say that they cherished Prussian sympathies, and were willing to see Prussian officers assume the predominance in their own army, but this sentiment could not be shown on account of Prussia's whole attitude, and was incomprehensible to the large masses. A portion of the nobility sympathised with the reactionary flood which rose ever higher in Prussia, but was obliged at the time to be careful not to give expression to such opinions.

The difficult external situation of the country did not prevent the fact that in Schleswig-Holstein very similar attempts on the rights of the nobility were continually being made by the masses, as in all other parts of Germany.

As in Franconia and Silesia, they rose up in every war against the still existing rights of proprietors of estates, and, as in my Thuringian lands, forests were devastated and rights of chase violated in Schleswig-Holstein. On the large estates of the Augustenburgers, and particularly on those of the less popular Prince von Noer, the peasants waged a regular war against their lord, and when Prince Frederick complains in his Memoirs that he suffered terribly from the Imperial troops under my command, the opposite is rather correct, as he was continually in need of our protection against his most inimical subjects. Moreover, these disagreements lessened more and more during the course of the campaign, and at the time of my return to Germany Schleswig impressed me as being in an orderly condition.

The popularity of the Princes of Augustenburg was not very great anywhere; they were considered highly aristocratic and hostile to the people. Prince von Noer lived amidst the most astounding illusions concerning the esteem felt for him and his power in the land. I became acquainted with him after the battle of Eckernförde, and kept up a lively intercourse with him and his reigning brother Duke Augustus. They were excellent, amiable men, as regarded their personal character valiant, honourable, upright and trustworthy, but stubborn in their opinions and convictions, and unconquerably obstinate on all points which concerned their rights and claims. Thus those excellent Princes made the tragical impression that they were little appreciated by their country, for whose cause they had sacrificed everything, while, at the same time, they were held responsible by European diplomacy to a degree which was in no way consistent with their real might and influence.

The Duke was a man of great political knowledge and thorough intimacy with European relations, and, under favourable circumstances, would have been able to place the Government of the country on a very suitable monarchical footing with the other Powers of Germany. Prince von Noer was the object of severe attacks on the part of the Liberal party, and at the same time of the greatest hatred on the part of the Danes and their King. This was why in the year 1849, I found him in the bitter state which he afterwards revealed in a much greater degree in the Memoirs already mentioned, to the surprise of many of his adherents. He was a man of benevolent mind, but very offensive in speech. His commanding personal appearance increased the effect of his critical manner. He was a tall man, powerfully and symmetrically built, altogether a handsome, proud figure. As he was everywhere far more conspicuous and assertive than the Head of the House, he unintentionally appeared as the leader of the small party, which might then be called the Augustenburg one. The men with these tendencies were not exactly well inclined towards the Government, and in this they had many reasons for being right. Beseler had all the faults of a political dilettante, whom circumstances had raised from a lawyer's

office in a small town to the business of a statesman; but nothing was further from the Stadtholder's character than a false step. Not devoid of a certain petty ambition, his path in life was straight and sure, as he himself was. He united in himself a strange mixture of exaggerated caution and blind groping.

If he could not agree with his colleague, Count Reventlow-Preitz, as already remarked, upon the choice of a third member of the Government, it was an all the more pleasant fact that, in spite of the total difference in their characters there was no apparent opposition in the co-operation of the two men. In fact only the true patriotism with which they were both filled could bridge over the dissimilarity of their fundamental views.

Count Reventlow was an idealist in the strictest sense of the word, and, like most idealists, passionate and incautious, but valiant and incorruptible. There was a certain amount of order in the administration of the country, and justice was maintained in respect of political offences with almost astonishing fidelity to the law. It is known that during those years insults to the King of Denmark, with whom as sovereign Duke, according to the fiction, the Duchies were not at war, were most severely punished in Schleswig-Holstein.

History will always regard it as one of the most remarkable examples of faulty and incomprehensible jurisprudence that it was possible to punish with imprisonment men who had been armed against Denmark and who risked their lives on the day of battle, when they spoke against the King of that country, or even demanded his being set aside.

The Government owed considerations of this kind not only to foreign political relations, but to their own nation also, for the latter was, according to my observation, throughout Schleswig and not only in the Danish speaking portions, really for the most part very well inclined to the King in the spring of 1849. With all the readiness on the part of the proprietors to endure the sacrifices demanded of them by the war, amongst the people there was great attachment shown to the Royal House.

The masses strove to quiet their consciences with the fable

that the King was a friend in Copenhagen, and was being forced to do what he did not wish, and that his whole heart was in the Schleswig-Holstein cause. How far this illusion was spread throughout the country in an ingenious form, had better not be inquired into; but that the Stadtholders really believed in a moral understanding between themselves and their King, I should like to be able to deny. This feeling has been essentially altered since the massacre of Fredericia, when the hatred of the Danes also developed in the fullest measure against King and dynasty.

Regarding the service, I had many painful conflicts with the Stadtholders, with whom, however, personally, I was on terms of great friendship. But the doubtfulness of everything relating to the command, the carelessness and want of order amongst the individual organs of the Schleswig-Holstein army, and the frequent interference of the War Department under the leadership of Jacobsen, who was really little versed in military matters, gave rise to all kinds of disputes in those of field service.

As regarded this, nothing was perhaps more characteristic than the order which was issued after the battle of Eckernförde concerning the fate of the captured *Gefion*. The brigade command was on this occasion overwhelmed by the most remarkable orders and counter-orders; 1, from the Imperial Ministry; 2, from the Chief Command; 3, from General Bonin; 4, from the Marina Commission at Kiel; 5, from the Government of Stadtholders; 6, from the local authorities. In consequence of this, Captain Donner, Senator Lange, Major Jungmann, who had been appointed commander of Eckernförde of the 12th of April, and, finally, the Board of Ordnance at Rendsburg, quarrelled for weeks with the brigade-command about the necessary precautionary measures to be taken with regard to the frigate.

The Stadtholders and I were thrown into serious embarrassment by an occurrence which took place near Friedrichsort, in which the English man-of-war *Hecate*, under the command of Captain Aldham played an unpleasant part.

A frigate seen at a considerable distance by the commander

of the battery at Friedrichsort, sailed with a Danish ship towards the bay. The commander of Friedrichsort had the necessary warning shot fired, to halt, but the ship sailing at the head, which had not been recognised as an English one at the right time, continued on its way. Upon this a second shot was sent across the deck. The English at once looked upon this as an insult to their flag, and when the English Consul Hodges in Hamburg received news of the occurrence, he demanded satisfaction of the Stadtholders. A very unpleasant exchange of dispatches arose, and the Consul, who was very hostile towards the Schleswig-Holsteiners, informed the Admiralty in London of the affair in unfavourable terms.*

* It will not be uninteresting if I insert here the document from Hodges to the Stadtholder Count von Reventlow, in order to show how wrongly the source of the affair was related :

'*Her Britannic Maj. Mission, Hamburg, 1st June*, 1849.

'MONSIEUR LE COMTE!—I very much regret having occasion to call the attention of the governing authorities of the Duchies of Schleswig and Holstein to an insult offered to Her Majesty's Flag under the following circumstances.

'Her Majesty sent two war steamers to proceed, one to the Elbe and Weser and the other to the Prussian and other parts in the Baltic to report upon the efficiency of the Danish Blockade. Her Majesty's steamer *Hecate*, Commander Aldham, on such service entered the Port of Kiel on the afternoon of the 30th ult., and was boarded by an officer in a boat sent from an armed gun boat, lying a short distance from the steamer's course, as Her Majesty's steamer was immediately stopped, but at the same moment a blank gun was fired from the fort at Friedrichsort. The officer from the gun boat on coming on board asked where the *Hecate* came from, and being informed from Swinemünde and that her commander wished to proceed to Kiel, where he expected that dispatches from his Government awaited him, he was informed by the officer from the gun boat that he had permission to proceed to Kiel.

'As soon as the boat and officer from the gun boat were clear of Her Majesty's steamer she proceeded on her course, when scarcely two or three minutes had elapsed before a shot from the fort passed close ahead of the *Hecate*, much to the surprise of her commander, who could not understand why such an outrage should be committed upon his country's flag, but particularly after the officer who boarded the steamer from the gun boat had said "you have permission to proceed." On this Her Majesty's steamer was stopped a second time, and boarded by an officer from the fort, who desired to know why the flag at the fort had not been saluted by Her Majesty's steamer. This officer was informed by Commander Aldham, that it was not customary in the British Naval Service for steamers to salute any flag, they having so few guns, and that his instructions were very stringent respecting salutes, and Commander Aldham then demanded, why a shotted gun had been fired at the *Hecate* from the fort after she had been visited from the gun boat, and to whom her commander had explained the reasons for entering the harbour of Kiel. The commander of the *Hecate* further stated, that he considered such an act an insult to the British Flag, and that he should report the same to his Government. The officer from the fort made a short apology or excuse for the offence committed, but left the *Hecate*, when she again proceeded on her course to Kiel.

'The foregoing is the substance of Commander Aldham's report of this occurrence, which I assure you I very sincerely regret, but, however unpleasant my duty in this case may be, I cannot help calling upon the Government of the Duchies for that reparation which I think the circumstances of the case require, which is, that by order of that Government an officer be sent on board of Her Majesty's steamer *Hecate* on her return to the Port of Kiel, who shall there apologise for the insult offered to Her Britannic Majesty's Flag under the circumstances above stated.

In order to smooth over the matter, I had meantime invited the officers of the *Hecate* to my house after their entrance into Kiel harbour, and tried to soothe them by means of every amiable attention I could show them. I also informed my brother and the Queen of the matter, and remarked that we had run the danger of being shot at by the Danish steamer *Hecla* and a frigate which wanted to run in under the protection of the *Hecate*. I was therefore able to announce to the Stadtholders on the 1st of June, that Captain Aldham had declared to me his willingness to regard the whole matter as a misunderstanding, thus bringing the episode to a pleasant conclusion.

My part in this and many other matters not only won me much sympathy from the people, but also the fullest confidence of the Stadtholders themselves.

'My position,' I was able to tell my brother at that time, 'is a very difficult one, as I am almost entirely without instructions, and Prittwitz, in his highly ambiguous position half under the Empire, which does not really exist, half under Prussian dictation, prefers to send no orders to the independent leaders of corps, rather than decided ones, which might compromise him with either side. As I am entirely separated from the main army and command alone in South Schleswig and Holstein, I play in some degree the part of Imperial military governor. The Stadtholders, Reventlow and Beseler have united closely with me, and I take part in many conferences, and have obtained no unimportant influence over the affairs relating to the land. In spite of all this, the position is a very singular one, and could only exist in such strange times as these.'

I thought it right to use my influence with the Government in political matters, namely, regarding the peace and the speedier restoration of the armistice, and tried on the one hand to establish more moderate conditions in the country, on

'I am asking in this case no more than is usually granted under like occurrences and such as I deem myself bound to require.

'I beg to assure you of the high consideration and respect with which I have the honour to be, etc. HODGES.

'TO COUNT REVENTLOW, etc.'

the other, to induce my relations in England to allow more powerful pressure to be put on the Danish Government than had hitherto been done. On the 11th of April I wrote to Albert in this sense:

'It will perhaps not be uninteresting to you to hear a few remarks upon the points which would be most fitted to renew the peace negotiations with Denmark.

'Carried on as it is here, it cannot be seen, for one thing, how long the war will last, and for another, to what complications it may yet lead. The Danes are masters of the sea, and have in the possession of the island of Alsen a position which makes it possible for them to prolong the war to an indefinite length of time. If they will not attack, we remain inactive, and only the conquest of Jutland remains to us, in order to force them to recommence hostilities. But this is still very uncertain and protracted.

'It is quite impossible to drive us out of Schleswig; we are too strong, and the greater part of the German nation is on our side. Besides this, it is clear that the magnificent Duchies are suffering terribly from the war, that we are losing our strength here, and that the Danes themselves will show more disadvantages than advantages. The chief thing will be, that the Danes will be forced to assent to an armistice of several months, during which the impending questions will be quickly and energetically solved.

'If the King had come to the Duchies last year, announced a general amnesty, and made soothing promises, there would have been some probability, according to the opinion of all those who are really acquainted with the spirit of the country, of seeing the King's wishes fulfilled. The bitterness is now terrible, and Denmark's position much more difficult. The chasm has widened, and may be attributed to the example of Holland and Belgium. The idea of the break with Denmark has now become more deeply rooted in the hearts of the peaceful and intelligent inhabitants of the country as being necessary, than last year, when swindlers and democrats were at the head. Even the man inclined to favour the Danes murmurs at and disapproves of an outbreak of war.

'Through my position as a German Prince, and the fact that I act from a strictly impartial point of view, I hear everything from all sides. Even in Copenhagen, only the mob, which is earning money through the immense preparations, desires war, the greater part of the people either oppose it, or are indifferent.

'Only bring about an armistice, for the bitterness increases every week, and the moderate proposals for peace have a less willing audience. The longer hostilities last, the more difficult will the later negotiations become. I will not go into the question, as everyone has his own particular views, and I have no desire to urge mine. I only wish to convince you that you must soon interpose, otherwise honour will forbid us to pause any longer.

'My position is as instructive as it is difficult. I am of good courage, I have the whole province under me, build redoubts and forts, arm steamers and gun-boats, in short, am exceedingly busy and always in motion. The fortunate success of my army has made me enjoy undeserved confidence, and I meet with less opposition than perhaps anyone else. But I have sufficiently convinced myself that people talk more than they act, and that energy is wanting here as well as everywhere else in Germany.'

As in the above letter, I did not fail during the following weeks to counsel a serious mediation, but my views of the course of political affairs argued but little with my hopes, and the more unfavourable the position of the Danes became, the more certainly did they appear to be able to reckon on the assistance of the Powers and the indecision of Prussia.

In March my brother had expressed his conviction that the negotiations for peace had failed principally because Russia, united with France, had looked forward to a political humiliation for Germany. After the breaking out of war he wrote on the 13th of May:

'Your war makes no real progress, and all our negotiations are doing the same. This is on account of Russia, who urges Prussia to high treason against Germany and advises a nerveless management of the war, at the same time strengthening

and stiffening Denmark in her inflexibility. The English public is entirely on the Danish side, and Lord Palmerston needs fresh successes after the many defeats which he has recently suffered.'

Only during the second half of June did my brother's position seem to offer greater hopes of peace, and then for a reason which was very remarkable, and very little noticed.

'The war,' he wrote on the 19th of June, 'will now soon come to an end, as people in Copenhagen are said to have grown afraid of their own democrats. The Russian fleet is said to be turned against them, as well as against Schleswig. A plan of theirs has been discovered, according to which they were to give up Jutland and form a Republic of the islands.'

In Schleswig-Holstein, meantime, the mistrust against the Prussian policy and Prussian leadership had spread more and more, and even amongst the troops of the German Confederate contingent it was fermenting powerfully since the insurrections of May in Saxony, Baden and the Palatine.

The events at home had naturally made themselves felt amongst the soldiers in the field, and were not calculated to increase a discipline which was already not over strong. Not only amongst the Schleswig-Holstein troops, where difficulties were continually arising amongst the newly appointed recruits, students who talked politics and democratic workmen, but also amongst the Bavarians, Badensers and Thuringians there were frequent expressions of discontent.

While I was staying a short time in Veile, at the end of the campaign, I heard the soldiers of a Bavarian battalion actually dare in my presence, loudly to abuse General von Prittwitz and the whole Prussian leadership. There was, as in the Thirty Years' War and in Wallenstein's camp, an unceasing debate concerning the generals and their capacities, undertakings and omissions.

I still retain a lively recollection of a most characteristic occurrence which took place at the time of the insurrection of Baden. A certain Captain Schwarz, of the Baden battalion under my command, presented himself to me one day, and handed me his pay which he had received a short time before,

with the explanation that he could on no account accept the money unless it was paid by the Provisory Government of Baden. He had no longer a Grand-Duke, and he would not take a groschen from Prussia, who was waging war against his native country. He was therefore forced to serve without pay.

When Prince von Noer compares the Imperial troops to a wild company, in which there was neither service, order, nor obedience, one may call this an immense exaggeration, such as was anything but rare in the Memoirs of that otherwise very excellent man, who had experienced so many disappointments.

I must by no means omit to mention that the best possible relations were established in the course of the campaign between the Imperial troops and the inhabitants of Schleswig. As I became better acquainted with both country and people day by day, my intercourse became more and more friendly with men belonging to the most different classes.

'I am really beginning to fall in love with the people here,' I wrote to my brother in June, 'they are the best minded and most reasonable whom I have as yet met with in Germany, and the country is exceedingly attractive and home-like. Schleswig-Holstein is our German England. Besides the outward appearance of the country, the customs and usages are quite English, except that there are no poor country people, a remarkable state of things! The simple reason is that there are but few towns and factories, and a natural division of land and soil. The frightful habit of living in public houses, which causes so much misery with us, is unknown here. Sunday is as quiet here as in England, where the severe church customs, rather than the natural inclinations of the lower classes, have made the day one of immense tiresomeness As there are few churches here, and the parishes often consist of farms lying at a distance of several hours from each other, the amount of worship is not very great, yet there is a much greater degree of morality than with us. It is true that this cannot be asserted of the towns of Kiel and Rendsburg, and democracy has warm supporters there also, which, as everywhere, tries to demoralise the people.'

Even social life, at least in the neighbourhood of Kiel, Rendsburg and Schleswig had gradually assumed a perfectly peaceful appearance. Apart from the uneasiness which the Danish ships continually caused on the coast, thereby demanding the sharpest watchfulness on the part of the reserve brigade, both Duchies were in an assured military position. Pleasant and friendly intercourse was established between my headquarters at Gettorf and a number of prominent families in the country.

Amongst the friends whom I gained at that time in Holstein my thoughts dwell with real pleasure on Count Reventlow at Altenhoff, and his little clever, highly educated wife, née Countess Vosz. The quiet and sure judgment and the extensive knowledge of the country and its relations which one met with in both these excellent people, made it really instructive to talk with them about the course things were taking, and I kept up a lively correspondence with both of them for a long time, after we were obliged to separate in July, in consequence of the Count's departure for Berlin on political business.

My acquaintance with the Baudissin family gave me no less pleasure; they recalled to a certain degree reminiscences of the old Danish Holstein times, but had shown their German patriotism with the most honourable resolution after the Open Letter.

When one considered the quiet and sensible manner in which the older generation remembered the once peaceful relations between the Danes and the Germans, one could hardly understand the petulance with which this able and prosperous German nobility was thrust off by the Danish Court and people. There was still a natural feeling amongst the proprietors, that the higher style of life, which emanated from the Danish royal thrones could not be maintained in small state life, and the members of these circles therefore flattered themselves with the hope that the peace would finally bring about a personal union which would allow of the restoration of the former relations with the royal Court.

I was quite convinced by my continual intercourse with

men of these opinions that such a solution would have been a very good thing, but I was hardly in a position to share the hopes of my friends, owing to the information sent me from London and Berlin.

Meanwhile there was at least no personal sympathy wanting for the Schleswig-Holstein cause, and added interest on the part of German Princes and other illustrious personages, who paid much attention to the Government and inhabitants of the country, by appearing on the scene of war. In May we received a visit from the Duke of Nassau and the hereditary Grand Duke of Weimar.

In the beginning of June it was the universal opinion that the Russian fleet, which had now appeared in Danish waters, might at any moment land several thousand men in Schleswig. Under these circumstances I was personally convinced that I would have to remain still longer at my post on account of the slow progress of the war and the daily increasing danger from outside complications, and I therefore gladly granted my wife's wish to visit me in camp. The Duchess travelled on the 23rd of June by way of Erfurt and Hamburg to Kiel, and I brought her thence to Gettorf on the evening of the 26th.

The hearty relations in which I stood to both country and people, and which I have just described in my sketch, could only be strengthened and increased by the presence of my wife. There was loud rejoicing and honest pleasure everywhere when she showed herself with me. They seemed to see, and with right, in our joint stay in the German plains of the North, as oppressed by fate, a sign of effinitive feeling and inclination.

'I am quite sad,' wrote Countess Reventlow to me at the time, she being, as already mentioned, in Berlin with her husband, 'at not being at home now. How gladly would I have waited upon the Duchess, a happiness which will perhaps never be mine again. I hope that the presence of the Duchess will so embellish Gettorf that it will be a compensation for the long, sad months which you have already spent there. Should

the apothecary's shop* at length grow too small in Gettorf, it will perhaps be remembered that Altenhoff is there although it is not set down on the map. Nevertheless shelter is to be found there.'

I should fear to weary the patience of the reader if I were to go into a full description of those happy days, which, with their friendly intercourse, formed a strange contrast to the sad accidents of war and the terrifying news of peace. The Duchess revelled in the beautiful woods of Aschau, or in the seashore, where, nevertheless, one was not seldom in danger of being unpleasantly greeted by the ships of the Danes cruising in the neighbourhood. Once, as we were riding by the outposts I had some trouble to get the Duchess out of reach of the hostile bullets which the *Skjold* and *Frisa* sent after us and a single unfortunate at a very short distance vedette. The Duchess allowed her good spirits to be so little affected by this as not only to deserve but to receive the greatest admiration.

We saw and visited friends almost daily; the families of von Hirschfeld, at Georgenthal, Weber at Rosenkranz, the Hamanns and Baudissins and many others. The proximity of Noer caused us to be frequent guests of Prince Frederick, and we met Duke Christian Augustus with his consort at Gottorp. Their two sons, Frederick and Christian, then twenty and eighteen years of age respectively, were in a dragoon regiment with the active army. Who would have thought that we were destined later to enter into relationship with this amiable, much tried and hardly pursued family! But enough of these flying sketches of such things; I will return to my narrative of what war and diplomacy had meantime done and brought about.

On the 7th of April General von Prittwitz was authorised by the Central Government as Commander of the Imperial army, to assume the offensive with all energy, after hostilities had been opened by Denmark. The order, with most desirable plainness, bid the General 'to set about throwing down the

* I had at first established my headquarters, in the apothecary's shop of Herr Birkenstock.

opponent in the shortest possible time, before diplomacy would have either time or opportunity to make its crippling influence felt on the free and powerful holding of the German sword, so that an honourable peace could be attained as soon as possible.'

And further on it said: 'That as soon as possible an offensive attitude was to be assumed everywhere, and the soil of the Duchies was to be entirely freed from Danish troops.'

The Danes had meantime anticipated these intentions on the part of the Central Power, for the war ministry in Copenhagen, in order to prevent unnecessary bloodshed, had given the army orders on the 8th to leave the Sundermitt, and wait at Alsen for the moment when circumstances should allow them to meet the enemy, man to man. The execution of this order was accelerated by the fact that on the 13th the Germans stormed the Düppeler redoubts in a five hours' fight, in which the Saxons and Russians took part by preference. In the North the Danes had, since the 10th, been in full retreat over the Königsau, and General von Prittwitz occupied the points deserted by them slowly and gradually, as if furnishing a diplomatic commentary to the orders of the Imperial Ministry. The Government of Stadtholders hastened to represent in Frankfort as well as in Berlin, that the quick seizure of Jutland alone would put an end to the war, and that the time of the year, the middle of April, was a full insurance against any foreign intervention, whereas a few weeks later the Russian fleet might be expected to set sail. But they would hear nothing in Berlin of such decisive war.

If one considers the position of the commanding General under these circumstances, one cannot indeed but find it difficult. Only a few weeks after the beginning of the war Prittwitz was the most unpopular man in the country, without his having in any way altered his sentiments and the views which were certainly in favour of the Schleswig-Holsteiners throughout. He was so restricted that he waited for the smallest order to march forward from Berlin, and perfectly serious men in the Government circles of Schleswig-Holstein asserted that he only gave such orders on Sunday, and never decided upon a forward movement on a week day.

That, under such circumstances, the relations between Prittwitz and Bonin could not grow pleasanter than I had seen when I first came into contact with Prittwitz, was only too plain.

Although a Prussian General, Bonin's position in the service of Schleswig-Holstein at least did not bind him to obey any directing hand as regarded individual movements, nor every move in the war, and, his character and inborn energy, would have prevented his allowing himself to be led in such a manner. He became aware of the order of the Imperial War Ministry of the 7th of April through the Government of Stadtholders and as is known, really marched to the borders of Jutland, without allowing himself to be confused by the chief command.

He had in his staff one of the ablest officers of the army of Schleswig-Holstein, Captain Delius, also from the Prussian army, as Chief. The latter was unfortunately taken from the General only too soon, and it was afterwards very unjustly and maliciously remarked, that Bonin was struck thrice at Fridericia, the first time during the battle, when Captain Delius happened to be struck by a Danish bullet. As the army of Schleswig-Holstein in the north had almost as little communication with the Chief Commander as the reserve brigade in the south of Schleswig, it was possible for them to occupy Kolding on the 20th of April, whilst the nearest Prussian and Imperial troops with whom there was not the slightest connection were still at Apenrode full eight miles distant.

General Prittwitz afterwards referred to the fact that Bonin had throughout refused obedience and had advanced that, far contrary to the expressed arrangements made at headquarters, that there would have been no possibility of succouring him in case of an attack by the Danes. Bonin really did have the whole Danish army before him, and his advance was so to speak, a challenge which General Rye, little inclination as he might have for battle, could not honourably refuse. On the 20th of April, apparently with the opinion that the German army stood behind Bonin's corps, he had hastily withdrawn to the road leading to Veile, but halted on the 22nd,

and well informed concerning Bonin's position, had allowed his troops to advance on the evening of the same day until within half a mile of Kolding

The left wing of Bonin's corps extended to Wanderup, part of the artillery was still behind in Christiansfelde, the advance guard occupied the heights on the other side of Kolding. The position was a very scattered one for so small a force, and it needed the greatest resolution to maintain it there without any hope of support from the main army.

That Bonin did this was of great political importance for the Schleswig-Holstein cause, and it was a petty judgment of the great success, when, at headquarters, as well as on the part of many writers, the resolute deed of Bonin and his brave troops was met with criticisms of his military theory.

I insert a report of the battle, which was drawn up in the happy excitement caused by the victory on the 24th in the Schleswig war department, after the first information received from the general staff.

'On the morning of the 23rd, at six o'clock, the Danes attacked us near Wanderup, later, at about eight o'clock they opened the fight at Kolding and spread strong bodies of troops through the road of Fridericia. The battle soon became general, and was very violent, especially on the left wing, which the enemy wished to pass around or break through.

'On the road to Veile near a high lying windmill, behind Kolding, two companies of the first infantry corps fought against a superior number of the enemy. A Danish squadron of Hussars was completely destroyed. They made an attack on a small intrenchment defended by us. The infantry men allowed them to approach within forty to fifty paces, and then opened fire. Only from five to six Hussars escaped death.

'At about ten o'clock Bonin gave orders for the town of Kolding to be evacuated. The advance guard led the retreat in the most beautiful order, still fighting, and was received on this side of Kolding by the first brigade. Meantime the artillery had arrived. The 12-pounders posted on the

heights this side of Kolding kept up an effective fire in the evening on the other side of the town, but the fight nevertheless came to a standstill everywhere, and even during several hours. The matter was critical, but took a different turn after one o'clock. Bonin pushed the advance guard forward to the centre, ordered the first brigade to storm the town of Kolding, and the second to a further attack.

'These movements were decisive, the burning town was taken by storm house by house, to the song of 'sea-encircled Schleswig-Holstein.' The forward pressure on the left wing made the enemy fall back, and at half-past three o'clock they began to retreat at all points. Our cavalry followed on the road to Veile as well as they could, in their weak state.

'The town of Kolding has been changed into a heap of ruins. As early as the morning some of the houses were burnt down. At mid-day Bonin ordered it to be set on fire with bombs, when it was seen that the citizens were taking part in the fight. Fowling pieces were discharged from the windows at our retreating troops.

'All portions of the troops took almost uninterrupted part in the fight, they bore themselves splendidly. They always started forward with a "hurrah!" to the attack, no corps left anything to be desired.

'Rye himself commanded the Danes. The loss on both sides is not yet certain; Bonin's estimate of a 1000 men is only a rough guess. The number of prisoners made has not yet been made known. At Steiber's departure from headquarters sixty were brought in, amongst them Orla Lehmann, who is at present confined in Castle Gottarp, until his fate is decided. It is not know what he wanted in the army, he was taken prisoner under highly suspicious circumstances; his conduct towards our officers, particularly Colonel St Paul, was most imprudent, he was therefore at once sent away. I let facts speak for themselves; the desire of the Danes, to deal with the Schleswig-Holsteiners alone, has now been fulfiled, and they are beaten. They are beaten by a numerically weaker army, which had not a man as reserve behind it, upon which they might depend for support. The battle of Kolding

on the 23rd of April will perhaps bring our cause to a quick decision, on account of the moral weight which it has laid in the balance.'

Thus the reporter from the Schleswig-Holstein War Department. The hope expressed at the end was shared by many military men and statesmen; in London especially, as I shall afterwards show more fully, too much weight was laid upon the fact that the Schleswig-Holsteiners had to help themselves.

Even after the affair of Kolding when Prittwitz was able to obtain permission from Berlin to pass over the frontier of Jutland, the Prussians did not move forward against Veile until full fourteen days later, and occupied the town after an important fight. The Holstein troops had approached Fridericia after a seven hours' fight at the defile of Gudsoe, and began to surround the fortress.

Bonin received orders from the Chief Command to take possession of the ground between Kolding, Veile and Fridericia, and to take up a strong position there.

An attempt to compel the fortress to surrender by bombarding it failed, and on the 16th of May Bonin became convinced that the Danes wished to hold Fridericia as long as possible. He therefore began the eventful siege.

On the 13th of May General Prittwitz established his headquarters at Veile, and the Danes entrenched themselves near Sonderburg, where they received strong reinforcements from Aarhus, and maintained their position until the 23rd. On the 30th of May the German troops at length made their way to Aarhus, and occupied the whole of Southern Jutland as far as Ring-Kjöbing.

The activity of the Imperial troops was almost at an end after these successes obtained with some few alternatives of the small war. Nothing more was heard of the army in the north for weeks, only the almost useless sieges and fights of the Schleswig-Holstein army before Fridericia afforded some variety in the quiet of the eventful campaign.

As regarded my reserve brigade, the Danish ships had been our only care, the sole thing which prevented our living

in perfect quiet from day to day. Countless alarms and provocations on the part of the Danes kept my battalion breathless. During the first week in April I secured the coast as well as was possible by means of numerous intrenchments and by raising blockhouses, and employed a portion of the time of quiet which was afforded us by a persistent east wind, in repairing the clothing and equipment of the men, as well as in further reconnoitring and the making and improving of means of communication inside the cantonments occupied by the different divisions.

On the 25th of April the reserve brigade was surprised by an order from the Commander-in-Chief, according to which it was to occupy and defend the island of Fehmarn. This order was all the more remarkable, as only the day before Prittwitz had mentioned the task of the reserve brigade as being 'the protection of the coast of Eckernförde as far as the sound of Fehmarn, down to the bay of Neustadt.'

There had been no talk of the island itself until now, and it would only be possible to support the defending force there by sending off an entire division.

The order of the Chief was carried out by the Stadtholders; and in a letter from General Prittwitz himself attention was called to the difficulty of affording support to an island. Under these circumstances I remonstrated against the splitting up of the corps, in accordance with the advice of my Chief of the General Staff von Treitschke, and sent Major Siegfried to Fehmarn to ascertain the state of affairs. There were four cannons there, and as many gunners, with a non-commissioned officer, and as the island could easily be invaded on three sides it was clear that any military occupation of it would be a formal challenge to the Danes to undertake a small expedition.

The project appeared to be one of the many fateful interferences which the Government of Schleswig-Holstein attempted to make in the operations of war; but I must not forget to remark that, in this case, I was assured on the other hand that the Stadtholders had only referred in a general way to the threatened position of Fehmarn, but

were quite innocent in the matter of the Commander-in-Chief's order.

Meantime the task which had now been set the reserve brigade was still less satisfactory to me, if it was to last any length of time. I therefore repeatedly requested the Chief Command to allow me to find occupation in the north. I had fixed my eye on Alsen, which was still in the hands of the Danes. I had several times been urged by patriots of Schleswig and particularly by the Duke of Augustenburg himself to induce the Chief Command to take this important island.

We made a close study of the points of attack, as well as the most suitable kind of operations, and in 1864 I had the pleasure of knowing that Prince Frederick Charles had taken possession of the island in the same way, as I had planned to do with my general staff at head-quarters in Gettorf in 1849.

But the Chief Command would neither consent to the attack on Alsen nor allow me to take part in the war with the main army. My wishes were refused, in a friendly manner, it is true, and an honourable one for me, but repeatedly and decidedly. Amongst the correspondence exchanged with regard to this matter a letter from General Prittwitz deserves to become generally known on account of the universality of the views which were expressed therein:

'I thank Your Highness most obediently for the favour and kind confidence which Your Highness has had the kindness to express to me in the honoured letter of the 29th inst. Will Your Highness kindly allow me to answer with all frankness:

'The kind of war operations which the Danes have undertaken allow us confidently to expect that they are everywhere avoiding a serious engagement, and that every time such an one may occur, they will withdraw to their lurking-places or their ships. The battle of Kolding on the 23rd of April does not contradict this supposition; the Danes only attacked us then, because they knew that the Schleswig-Holsteiners were alone, and hoped to be able to win an easy victory over them, as they did last year. It is more than probable that the enemy will give up all Jutland if the Imperial troops press

forward still further, and will move their troops to Fühnen, unless it has not already been done.

'On the other hand it may be reckoned with equal certainty that the Danes will seize the opportunity of landing, or at least of making a disturbance at points where there are but few troops. All points cannot be protected, but it must be done as regards the most essential ones. Amongst these I count:

'1. Eckernförde and Kiel. They appear to me to be seriously threatened, if not at present, at least in case the war lasts much longer, not by the whole forces of the Danes, but by a number of troops equal to the Reserve Brigade.

'2. The island of Alsen. The island forms an entrenched position, the sconce of the bridge at Sonderburg furnishes means of passing over. The enemy can easily assemble from fifteen to twenty battalions here. The thing will be always to have an equally large muster at Sundewitt to oppose them. One and a half divisions would be necessary for this.

'3. Fridericia and Snoghoi. They belong almost to the same category as the island of Alsen, here also at least half a division will have to be stationed to watch.

'Thus only about one division and one or two cavalry regiments will remain for the military promenade to Jutland, and the manifold detachments on the western coast.

'It appears to me that the task of protecting Eckernförde and Kiel, together with a great part of the coast is as honourable, and more pleasant, than that of watching the head of the bridge near Sonderburg, or the fortress of Fridericia. Your Highness should add to this the fact that you and the brigade have already performed a deed of arms which will perhaps only be repeated once during several centuries.

'The urgent request of leaders and troops for activity certainly deserves the highest praise; but at least three-fourths of the main army are placed on the defensive by the peculiarity of the seat of war and the existing disproportion of the sea forces, whilst only one fourth remains for offensive movements of doubtful effect.

'It is beyond the reach of my power to alter this state of

things, but it furnishes at the same time a justification for the part which I have assigned to the reserve brigade. Besides, I have transferred the division of the second arriere ban to the Sundewitt, because I consider the bodies of troops of which it consists to be less fitted for quick movements which should perhaps be given to the reserve brigade.

'Your Highness will allow me to hope that the views expressed here may be fitted to answer the honoured and fully appreciated scruples which have directed the pen of Your Highness. I remain with the utmost respect Your Highness's most obedient

'PRITTWITZ, *Lieutenant-General.*

'*Christiansfelde, May 27th*, 1849.'

It cannot be denied that there was a great deal of truth and reason in the representation made by the Commander-in-Chief, but what was meant by it could not but be regarded as a personal complaint of those tasks which the Imperial War Ministry had pointed out six weeks previously in the execution of quick blows and the speedy termination of the war. It was now, however, too late for an enemy whose strength lay in the fact that it withdrew, waited, and was prepared to drag out a small war interminably.

Prittwitz had also rightly seen that Kiel and Eckernförde were continual objects of hostile provocation, and that the Danes would only too willingly have directed a deadly blow at both these hated places.

How greatly each military measure in this war was conceived and understood from a political point of view, was shown by the instructions of the Chief Command issued on the 3rd of June, according to which the Russian war ships were only to be prevented from running into the harbours of Schleswig-Holstein, in case they assumed an oppressive attitude.

Although the chief strength of our means of defence consisted in hindering the running in of hostile ships, our duty now was, to respect the Russian ships, until they were in the bay and intimated their intentions otherwise than by means

of cannon-balls. It was therefore uncomfortable enough, when, on the 18th of July, the news arrived from Friedrichsort that four Russian ships of the line, eight frigates and two steamers were in sight. They were making their way to the north, and the Russian Government was doubtless already at that time assured that further menaces were not necessary.

I had also, as will soon be shown, already been privately informed that the conclusion of the armistice in Berlin could only be put off for some hours. The Chief of my Staff, Colonel von Treitschke, had been recalled on the 19th of June under the most honourable circumstances by the Saxon Government, as he had been placed at the head of the General Staff to be formed for the royal army.

Everything betokened that the tragic play was nearing its end; but as there was a general opinion that the Danes were making preparations to strike a special parting blow at the reserve brigade before the ratification of the armistice, such as they were about to direct against Bonin, the utmost care and attention were needed until the end.

On the 9th of July, several estimable men from Kiel visited me, amongst them the directors of the Naval School at Hottenau, in order to inform me that a confidential messenger had been sent to them from Copenhagen by way of Lübeck, with notice that the ratification of the armistice was not to take place until an attempt had been made against Eckernförde.

Almost at the same time the Chief Command informed me that large divisions had been shipped from Fridericia, and that there would probably be a demonstration on the coast of Schleswig or Holstein. I undertook to reconnoitre in the Schwansen with a continued column, and ordered two gunboats from Kiel to the Schleimündungen. The brave captains also ran the double blockades, and were on the spot early in the morning. As a reward we at once began a cannonade with a Danish frigate, setting the whole neighbourhood into a state of excitment. I had gone on board one of the gunboats, but receiving news of the approach of a Danish squadron, I

was forced to withdraw and concentrate all my troops around Eckernförde and Kiel.

On the night of the 14th of July, eight sailing ships and three steamers really appeared before the bay of Kiel, and gave the alarm to the troops, as had been done innumerable times, only to leave in the morning. It was the last hope of the brigade to have another fight, and to be able to revenge the surprise which had overtaken the poor Schleswig-Holsteiners a few days before at Fridericia.

For there was in those days an almost universal opinion that Bonin's heavy defeat at a moment when peace was as good as concluded at Berlin, could be nothing more than a manœuvre to depress the popular sentiment and mind in Schleswig-Holstein, to humilate the country and to weaken or destroy the army of the Duchies.

It was to be expected that under this unfortunate concatenation of circumstances the newspapers in Schleswig-Holstein would openly lay all the blame of the disaster on General von Prittwitz. Apart from the small local papers which the Government of Stadtholders were courageous enough to suppress, the *Free Press* of Schleswig-Holstein under the direction of Olshausen had undertaken the task of pleading against the Chief Command. This journal had a large circulation, not only amongst the population, but amongst the soldiers also; and it sounds very amusing when an editor of the paper complained fourteen years later in his Memoirs of the fact that von Prittwitz was hostile to the *Free Press*.

The party led by Olshausen had been completly done for since Fridericia; it is all the more pleasant to notice, on the other hand, that the government of the country generally, and most persons of higher position had shown rare patriotism and almost antique calm at this difficult moment. What I read in a letter placed at my disposal, written by a government official to a third person, is a perfectly correct description of the situation.

'The country is quiet and composed. One sees nothing of effeminate want of courage, or rage, but manly resolution, firm confidence in the good cause, and readiness to make any sacri-

fice of goods and life. According to letters from the soldiers belonging to the educated classes, on the other hand, it is believed throughout the army that Prittwitz has betrayed them, and that he will do so still more. This is the sad consequence of the wonderful leadership of the war.'

Regarding matters from a military point of view, General von Prittwitz was charged with having allowed the Danes stationed near Veile and Aarhus to get away, without informing Bonin of their withdrawal. If he knew that the Danes were making preparations to embark, he could not have doubted that they entertained the intention of leading the greater part of their forces against Bonin.

On the other hand, it was pointed out as an act of boldness on Bonin's part that, with a fortress like Fridericia, he had latterly moved his supports to the cantonments, thereby making a sortie on the part of the Danes from the fortress most fatal. The defenders of the brave General always retorted that the Danes would not have been able to appear with such superior fighting forces if Prittwitz had conscientiously watched them.

I must not omit to mention here that I was fully informed at my head-quarters at Gettorf of the withdrawal of the Danish army from Veile and Aarhus, and had sent General Bonin news of it.

Unfortunately my estafet only arrived during the battle, as Bonin himself afterwards told me with thanks. Naturally it was not possible to reach the General with succour from the reserve brigade. But it was worthy of notice that in Kiel the rumour had been flying about for several days that the Danes were concentrating their forces at Fridericia.

One of the inexplicable things in the fatal event was the fact that von Prittwitz promised to send Bonin help, but assured him at the same time that it could not arrive at Fridericia before the 7th of July. In order to understand the want of unanimity and the inefficient co-operation of the two Generals, one must remember that since the beginning of the campaign they had, as it were, accustomed themselves to

pay each other but little regard, and to operate as if they belonged to two different armies.

A few days after the affair of Fridericia the Commander-in-Chief personally defended his line of conduct to me by saying that he had from the beginning only appointed the corps of Schleswig-Holstein to watch the fortress, and to prevent a sortie against the main army and a landing from Füning. But Bonin had always acted on his own responsibility, and had thus taken it upon himself to seize the fortress.

Such unfavourable and strange relations as those which existed between the two Generals, who were nevertheless serving the same cause, might to a certain point be explained by the confusion and disorder of the times; but I was always convinced, that without the incentive of diplomatic motives it could never have led to such consequences.

I afterwards learned from the perusal of many documents on the subject, that there were many deep reasons for the want of any united leadership in the operations of war. One found one's self, strange to say, involved in a very widespread error concerning the necessity of independent action on the part of the Government and the army of Schleswig-Holstein. Whether it was that they desired by this means to lull the mistrust of envious Powers against Germany and Prussia, or that they desired to demonstrate the vitality of a Schleswig-Holstein State administration, the particular views of Government and army were encouraged on all sides.

The discoverer of the utmost independence of the Schleswig-Holstein army and Government was, in the truest sense of the word, Bunsen in London. Accustomed to lay too great a weight upon the negotiations and suggestions of Lord Palmerston, he persuaded himself and all those who surrounded him that the Schleswig-Holsteiners could only be helped if they gave a proof of their self reliance by independent feats of arms, by independent deeds, and by asserting their political independence. Stockmar also was very full of this plan, though not at the fire-side, and they now used every possible lever in order to influence the Government of Stadtholders and the War Department, as well as the Chief Command, to

this effect. As soon as the war began they applied to the Imperial Ministry to have Prittwitz instructed to allow the Holsteiners to proceed independently. That Hanoverians and not Holsteiners were in the first place allowed to move to Sundewitt, excited these gentlemen greatly, and they continually tormented the Government of the country to influence Prittwitz 'to place these views first.'

Whether Bunsen's confidential position with the King of Prussia was able to raise propaganda in Berlin also, for the war policy of the Schleswig-Holsteiners calculated to influence the English newspaper public, has been left undecided. But if Prittwitz was instructed in favour of this by the Ministry there, his attitude as General-in-Chief is amply explained even if we should have to doubt whether, as a soldier, he was in a position to justify it. In any case, the independent actions of the army of Schleswig-Holstein could not possibly be so hopefully regarded in military circles as in the diplomatic salons in London, and the non-success of the Schleswig-Holstein army received the bitter imputation, 'they would not have it otherwise.'

The saddest of all was, that at the moment of the check the fate of the country had been sealed, and even a victory would have been no use. In the Government circles of Schleswig-Holstein they deceived themselves with the thought that it would be impossible, after the affair of Fridericia, to conclude the armistice. 'Under the impression of this event,' wrote a government official at that time, 'they will not want to negotiate in Berlin, and we therefore do not let our courage sink.' In reality, in spite of the news of the unfortunate surprise having reached Berlin on the 8th of July, the armistice was concluded on the 11th.

I received detailed news from both the Schleswig-Holstein friends, the Reventlows of Altenhoff, and I insert here a part of the communication of the intellectual and patriotic woman:

'The negotiations,' she wrote on the 10th of June from Berlin, 'between Messrs von Reedtz and Schleinitz are said not to have led to the smallest understanding, but it is equally

certain that no success in arms, no victory, no sacrifice can be of any use to the poor, mistaken cause, which Your Highness has not disdained to serve with your good sword, and that all the blood will yet be shed for it, is in vain. And each of such drops of blood therefore burns into the heart! It is still not easy here in Berlin to hear repeated everywhere around me: "Rebels, republicans, or bad people, like Francke in Frankfort." The ingratitude of the latter towards Prussia cannot be denied; how far the Duchies, in spite of the dross which their cause has naturally accumulated, deserve the first accusations jointly or individually, . . . . that, most Gracious Sovereign, you will best be able to decide! The thought that you sometimes wander under the shade of our old trees, pleases me greatly! Perhaps it is the last happiness which those dumb witnesses of the approaching future will experience. Destiny goes on her way irrevocably, and will penetrate into the peace, so long undisturbed, of my dear homelike forest seclusion. May God direct things for the best at this time, when great and small seem to be so entirely beyond all human calculation, and further protect Your Highness.'

Although the contents of this letter were confirmed officially, yet the manner in which the piece was played to the end in Berlin surprised me:

'*Berlin, July* 12, 1849.

'Although I do not doubt that you, Gracious Sovereign, are fully informed of everything which has happened and is happening here, yet I cannot refrain from sending you news myself from Berlin, in this moment of the bitter decision, regarding the fateful and badly managed affairs of our country. Everything is too sad for words! One saw the contemptible conclusions being slowly arrived at, one knew that the newly ordered cholera quarantine could, and perhaps was only intended, to serve to prolong the negotiations, but nevertheless consoled oneself with the promise of the negotiators that no more blood would flow, and that there was an actual armistice. This was expressed so decidedly, so repeatedly assured, that, with our old-time ideas of truth and faith, we could not doubt it.

'The perfidiousness of the enemy took a favourable advantage of this half-way state of things, and the news of the defeat of Fridericia arrived officially on the 8th. It was known that the negotiations were approaching their close, but we involuntarily expected that, before this last act had been explained, before the blood already shed is dry, I may even say, before it has been mourned for, the last touch would *not* be made to the treaty! Herr von Schleinitz formally promised Herr von Moltke, the commissioner sent here by the Government of Stadtholders, to communicate with him as soon as the deeds were signed. The signature took place at midday on the 10th December, the evening of the 11th, Moltke, and all those whose weal and woe has now probably been flung beyond hope into the abyss, learned it from the newspapers. The spirits of the lower world have been conjured up, and the doors flung open to revolution! The manner in which the matter has been conducted and ended will bring its own revenge, not only in the destroying of the Duchies, but universally as well.

'There is still a great deal of mystery surrounding the conditions of the armistice. Nevertheless, it appears certain that a line of demarcation will be drawn through Schleswig, and the North will be occupied by 2000 Swedes, the South by 6000 Prussians. The Duchies are to have different administrations. The Government in Schleswig is to consist of one member to be nominated by Denmark and one by Prussia, and an English head. The army of Schleswig-Holstein is to be withdrawn behind the Eider. Should difficulties arise in the matter, all the Prussian officers and Bonin will be recalled, and we shall be placed in the hands of the democrats and radicals. The line of demarcation is incomprehensible to us, because every thought of a division of Schleswig has been entirely excluded by the peace.

'Opinion here is said to be divided; in some circles there is rejoicing at the removal of the last "March difficulties" of last year. Where the old Prussian feeling of honour still prevails, there is bitter mortification over so unsuccessfully a conducted affair! The King's aide-de-camp, Herr von Man-

teuffel, leaves to-morrow for Schleswig. As he belongs entirely to the reactionary party, I greatly fear that he will not have a softening influence over the difficulties. I have reached the point now of not daring to hope for any fortunate circumstances, but find my only comfort in the fact that our fate has reached a phase beyond the calculation and influence of man, and that there is only a feeling that we are suffering the heavy fate, or rather punishment inflicted on us by Heaven! My poor husband returned yesterday; he is deeply affected by these sad developments. Although it forces us to leave here, he nevertheless wishes first to wait for the news of the completed ratification in Copenhagen.

'We are very anxious to hear when Your Highness will leave headquarters, and look back with sorrow to the good, hopeful days in April. I hope that the presence of the Duchess has nevertheless lent a poetic charm to the end of the Campaign of 1849, and that you will therefore not impute all the bad hours of this summer as the fault of the unfortunate Duchies.

'In these sad, these more than clouded times, the "*good*" hours with you will always remain a bright spot, and we hope that Your Highness will not wipe them completely from your memory.—Etc.

'ELISABETH REVENTLOW.'

It would be difficult to describe the feeling which predominated in patriotic circles concerning the 10th of July better than is done by the words which came from the heart of this remarkable woman, whose natural clearsightedness showed her the future only too plainly. The professional politician could not form a more favourable opinion, either, when he observed the course of the negotiations and the prominent tendencies of the Prussian Government individually.

For the desperate contents of the Berlin armistice were decided on and prepared with all the deliberation of European reaction.

Nothing is more erroneous than the statement that they only forcedly accommodated themselves to the compulsion of

outside complications, the negotiations rather furnished a proof that the cause had been taken possession of artfully and by every possible means, in order to put an end to it. For the revolution was to be smothered, and if a certain milder method was apparently employed with the Schleswig-Holstein Government, this only took place because the King and the Prussian army had been too deeply involved in this event, since April in the preceding year, and had to be withdrawn slowly and carefully, from the affair.

I am at present in a position to note down the convictions at which I arrived personally through manifold despatches received in the diplomatic intercourse of those days, and think it right to communicate something with regard to this.

As the issuing point of the political activity of the Berlin Cabinet in the peace question, we must first of all keep to the fact that, as early as the end of March, the King had set the Ministry the task of concluding a separate peace.

In London they had been informed of this interlude, a few days before the re-opening of the war, and Bunsen had been interrogated by Palmerston on the subject, the latter's ambition making him anxious not to have his part as mediator spoiled. Lord Palmerston also knew that the Queen herself was attached to the Schleswig-Holstein cause, and that she wished England to interpose strongly in favour of the rights of the Duchies.

This tendency now received a very powerful impulsion from the battle of Eckernförde. In a report lying before me, made by the Schleswig-Holstein diplomatic agents in London, the situation in the leading circles is so clearly described that I will copy a portion for the benefit of the reader:

'Yesterday morning I received news of the splendid victory of Eckernförde, a real judgment of God. I at once communicated it to Bunsen, who was no less delighted. He advised me to go at once to Windsor Castle, where the Court has been since Thursday, in order to convey the news to Prince Albert and Baron Stockmar. I did so at once. The circumstances that the Prince's brother had had the chief command, naturally helped to increase the rejoicing. I

had remarked before this that the Prince is not only German in feeling, but, from the point of view of rights, especially Schleswig-Holstein.

'In the Privy Council, in which he has a seat as eventual Regent, he is very useful to the cause. As Stockmar afterwards told me, having spoken with the Queen for a moment, she was also greatly pleased that the Schleswig-Holsteiners had at length gained the victory, especially as it was under the leadership of her brother-in-law. The courtiers, on the other hand, were quite disconcerted, and somewhat inclined to doubt the matter.

'A German naval victory is, to tell the truth, as incredible here as it is unpleasant. Baron Stockmar, as well as the Prince, both declared that this victory can become decisive in its moral effect on the allies of the Danes, and Lord Palmerston would now probably change his opinion that the troops of Schleswig-Holstein would run away at the first sound of the cannon. Bunsen's declaration of the 5th of April, that everything was placed in question by the outbreak of hostilities, will now become important. The withdrawal of the basis of the peace, thus uttered by him without any serious intention, will now be self-understood. I intend to speak seriously with him about it to-day.'

In fact, Bunsen hesitated to resume the negotiations for peace during the next few days, and wished to wait for new proposals on the part of Denmark, which should be brought about by means of English mediation. When, however, the Imperial Ministry really withdrew the former basis of the negotiations, and demanded the closer union of Schleswig and Holstein, a pregnant step from Berlin followed on about the 12th of May, which altered the whole political position.

That day Bunsen received orders to keep aloof for the future from any negotiation in the name of the Provisory Central Power, with regard to the Schleswig-Holstein cause. The motive of this decision on the part of the Cabinet was asserted to be, that the law regarding the establishment of the Provisory Central Power had settled the conditions of

war and peace of the Imperial Government in connection with the National Assembly. But the latter could no longer be recognised by Prussia, and the right of the Central Power to make dispositions for war or peace consequently no longer existed. But this was only a formal motive, the material one was added, that the Central Power was too weak to make such important decisions as were necessary, with regard to the Danish war.

Bunsen received at the same time the notice that a similar order had been sent to General von Prittwitz, and that the Archduke Administrator of the Empire had been informed of these dispositions on the part of the Prussian Cabinet.

It was further explained, that Prussia held it as her duty on all accounts to take in hand the direction of all the affairs so important to Schleswig and Holstein, alone and independently.

Thus, in reality, they had gone back to the standpoint of the separate peace, and in the crudest form of a complete negation of the Imperial Power. I was now far from admitting that the military and political situation *vis-à-vis* of Denmark should be regarded as impaired: the question was, what use Prussia would make of the freedom of action which she had reserved to herself. The Danes finally came forward in London with the proposal to conclude an armistice which should last until the end of the year, and to draw a line of demarcation northwards from Husum and Flensburg. The southern portion of Schleswig was to remain in the hands of Prussia. Even Lord Palmerston at once decidedly declared, with regard to this demand, that the Danes might as well resign the idea at once. But the Berlin statesmen were less scandalised by the Danish proposal than the English Minister, and the line of demarcation really became the basis on which the new armistice was to be negotiated in Berlin.

As soon as the first news arrived of the change of policy and the negotiations to be carried on in Berlin, the Schleswig-Holstein Government tried to obtain some sure influence over the transactions. After Denmark declared herself ready to send a plenipotentiary to Berlin, the Government of Stadt-

holders very modestly asked 'that, as long as a transaction concerning an armistice to be settled was to be begun with the royal Danish Government, the Duchies would not be refused a corresponding share in it.' This petition received no answer from the Prussian Government for a month; and only when the negotiations were certain did the Stadtholders receive an intimation that 'it would be difficult to find a form under which a proposal could be made for Schleswig-Holstein's taking a direct part in the transactions, and admitted by Denmark.' *

In the meantime, Herr von Reedtz with Schleinitz, in co-operation with the Earl of Westmoreland, as representatives of the mediating Power in the Peace and Armistice question, had investigated with all possible secrecy, and although it appeared during the past week as if Prussia were opposing the impudent expectations of the Danish plenipotentiary, there could be no illusion in initiated circles, as the reader must already have seen from the Cassandra-like lament of Countess Reventlow, which I inserted above.

Herr von Reedtz had really made the line of demarcation the point of issue of the armistice negotiations, and Schleinitz intrenched himself only behind the question of guarantees, which had to be found for the peace afterwards to be concluded. In order to sweeten the bitter pill, North Schleswig was given over to the Swedes, in the south the Prussians undertook to play a part which Palmerston had pointed out a few weeks before as being absurd.

Westmoreland had never been so joyous since the breaking up of the illusions respecting the Empire, because his wife rivalled with Lady Cowley, whose husband, accredited in the German Empire, wished to claim higher rank. He regarded his post of mediator in the peculiar way of thinking it right to attempt the possible and impossible for Denmark. Lord Palmerston now suddenly discovered that the English trading classes desired peace at any price, and that the

* The latter notes of the 23rd of May, 19th and 28th of June have been printed in 'Documents regarding the armistice concluded between Prussia and Denmark.' Kiel 1849.

Ministry could no longer oppose such authorised desires. He instructed, counselled, and exhorted Prussia in every way to yield, and even threats were not left out.

The influential, if quiet, activity of Queen Victoria is not generally known, without whose noble-minded interference English diplomacy would have gone over into the Danish track in a still more decided manner. When, in his strange zeal as mediator, Lord Westmoreland announced, towards the end of July, that Herr von Schleinitz was not yet quite prepared to let fall the promises of his King to the Schleswig-Holsteiners, Lord Palmerston moved in the Council of Ministers that the firm decision should be expressed, that England would place herself on the side of Denmark, unless the war was ended by the first of July. It was then that the Queen rose energetically against this change of principle, and demanded that they should unalterably keep to a policy which leaned towards neither the one side or the other. There was a very hard struggle between Palmerston and the Queen, in consequence of which the noble Lord saw himself forced to hand in a memorial which laid forth the reasons of his zeal for peace, but which by no means quieted the Queen, or induced her to consent. Palmerston, therefore, found it necessary to tone down the threatening note, and, by means of additional dispatches, to charge Lord Westmoreland to read only certain parts in Berlin, and leave no copy with the Ministry.

All this was not really necessary, for the exhortation to establish peace had been made in Berlin. The Russian pacification in Hungary was represented to King Frederick William as being the most correct solution of such uprisings as had taken place in Schleswig-Holstein against the Sovereign, and he considered himself disgraced more and more every day by his protection of a revolutionary cause. Thus the conference had not only entirely submitted in the armistice questions to the Danish demand, but, what was perhaps worse, again destroyed the future basis of peace in too hasty a manner. The latter was, with the greatest

opposition, defined as belonging to the determinations which the German Imperial Central Power had arrived at before the renewed outbreak of the war. In the protocol which is added to the Berlin armistice agreement, it said in Art. 1 :— 'The Duchy of Schleswig will, as far as regards its legislative power and internal administration, receive a separate constitution, without being united with the Duchy of Holstein and without prejudice to the political union which binds the Duchy of Schleswig to the Crown of Denmark.' In the letter of the President of the Imperial Ministry, Herr von Gagern, to the English Ambassador, Lord Cowley, on the 3rd of February, the principles of peace proposed by the British Government were, on the other hand explained on the ground that Schleswig was to receive a separate constitution, different for the Danish one on the one hand, and that of Holstein on the other.

As may be seen, an alteration had been made in the text of the protocol, and when the letter of notification from Count Brandenburg to the Government of Stadtholders, therefore referred to that basis of the Imperial Ministry, the latter hereupon expressed himself moderately and restrainedly in the answer, the note running :

'The Stadtholders must deeply deplore that the royal Prussian plenipotentiary has allowed himself to be persuaded to conclude a preliminary protocol which is decidedly injurious to the rights of the Duchies, on the supposition of their being bound to a former basis of peace long since withdrawn by the Provisory Central Power, and in a mistaken acceptance of the unanimity with this basis.'

If, meantime, the Government of Stadtholders founded their opposition to the protocol on the hope that 'Germany' would not recognise the Prussian conclusion, this showed, as in so many steps taken by the Government of Schleswig-Holstein, a meagre practical conception of a given situation.

'As long as the feeling for right and honour prevails in Germany, this is not possible,' said the Government of Stadt-

holders. But that Germany, which was at this moment represented by the Central Power,—the Imperial Jochmus Ministry, and an Administrator of the Empire, who had finally made himself the representative solely of Austrian intentions in Germany, were not the instances to which one would appeal against the Prussian armistice.

## CHAPTER V

UNPLEASANT SITUATION OF THE DUKE.—SPECIAL ENVOYS TO BE SENT TO ALL THE GERMAN COURTS.—THE DUKE'S LETTER TO COUNT REVENTLOW-PRIETZ.—THE COUNT'S REPLY.—EXTRACTS FROM HARBOU'S DESPATCHES.—THE DUKE OF AUGUSTENBURG ADVISED TO GO TO LONDON.—HE DEMURS.—WITHDRAWAL OF THE IMPERIAL CONTINGENT AND THE RESERVE BRIGADE.—BLOODY INSURRECTION IN ALTONA.—THE RETURN TO GOTHA.—THE DUKE OF SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN RUINED.—HIS APPEAL AS TO THE CONFISCATED ESTATES.—THE EVACUATION OF SCHLESWIG BY THE PRUSSIANS.—GENERAL WILLISEN SUCCEEDS BONIN.—A BAD APPOINTMENT.—DON PACIFICO.—LORD PALMERSTON AND 'CIVIS ROMANUS SUM.'.—THE DUKE'S LETTER TO THE KING OF PRUSSIA.—HE ANSWERS FROM WARSAW.—LETTERS FROM SCHWARZENBURG AND RADOWITZ.—INFAMOUS TREATMENT OF DISBANDED SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEINERS.—DEEP MISERY: PERSONAL INSTANCES GIVEN.

DEEPLY occupied as everyone was with the Berlin settlements of the 10th of July, the practical politician had no means of withdrawing from the consequences of this eventful step on the part of the only real power in Germany.

A firmer junction of the freeminded and progressive part of the nation with Prussia might limit the reaction in Berlin: the sovereign rights of the Augustenburgers, not yet lost, might possibly again afford help to the cause of Schleswig-Holstein; but to attempt an appeal to Germany against Prussia, I regarded from the first as a great mistake on the part of the Government of Stadtholders.

This policy had placed me personally in a by no means pleasant situation. At any moment an order might arrive from the Chief Command to march back or to break up the reserve brigade; as commander of the latter I must of course

obey. At the same time all the German Princes had received a summons from the Stadtholders to oppose the armistice of Berlin, to leave the troops in Schleswig-Holstein, and to continue the war against Denmark: for a Prince, who was in the field, a situation, as may be understood, of the most painful nature.

Although the Government of Stadtholders had already received information from their own agents that Saxony and Hanover, probably Bavaria also, had already declared their acceptance of the armistice, the government circles of Schleswig-Holstein still counted on different states, such as Hesse, Nassau, the Thuringian Duchies, and others.

I would hardly be able entirely to believe my own recollections, had I not recently found all this fully confirmed in official documents from the Stadtholders, now lying before me: they really did me the honour to reckon Coburg particularly amongst the opposition to the Prussian armistice. Besides, the Government of Stadtholders had sent a protest to all the German Governments, expressing their expectations that the troops would be left in Schleswig-Holstein. Even after the Stadtholders had received a personal explanation from General von Prittwitz as Commander-in-Chief, that he intended punctiliously to carry out the armistice, they looked to a division amongst the princely contingents.

A resolve was made to send special envoys to all the German Courts, in order to emphasize the expectations of the Stadtholders. Francke, Heintze, Reventlow-Farve and several others travelled through Germany in every direction, in order to plead the cause personally to the Princes and their Ministers.

Beseler, who, under the impression of the disappointment and pain of the people had drawn on the radical elements together with a great part of the conservative party in the Assembly to make very patriotic, but not very statesmanlike resolutions, commanded the situation. He imagined he would be able to make the most intense impressions on even Bonin and the Prussian officers by his art of persuasion, and to be able to work around these soldiers so accustomed to Prussian

discipline by means of his instruction as to rights and his Schleswig-Holstein fictions. To the mourning over the concluded armistice were joined the terrors of political doctrine, which now had the power in its own hands.

The departure from the land which I had so learned to love was made doubly hard to me. The inquiries made by the Government of Stadtholders of the German Governments had, indeed, made it more the duty of the States Ministry of Coburg-Gotha than that of the Sovereign to give a suitable answer, and I might quietly have waited to see whether my two popular Ministers von Stein and Bröhmer would declare war against the kingdom of Denmark or not. I thought that, considering the near relations in which I personally stood to the affairs of Schleswig-Holstein, I might be allowed, without the constitutional countersign of the Ministers, to represent to the Government of Stadtholders the uselessness and faultiness of the steps which they were taking.

I therefore wrote in the most friendly tone to Count Reventlow-Prietz, to try and induce him to accept the armistice. I represented to him how wrong it was to try and take the country away from the further leadership of its probably future dynasty, the Augustenburgers, and to place them in an entirely false position.

I pointed out the danger of the situation, if Schleswig-Holstein, isolated, rushed into further war. I was well aware of the kind of reply which the gentlemen belonging to the Government of Stadtholders might expect from the Princes. I promised, for my part, to do them all the service which I could in the country, in England, Brussels, Berlin and everywhere where I had friends and kinsmen.

The Stadtholder's reply followed in the greatest haste, as if he were afraid that his diplomats, departed since the 15th and 16th, in their attempt to convert the German Governments, amongst whom figured even the Elector of Hesse, would be delayed or disturbed. Reventlow's letter ran as follows:

'*Schleswig, July* 17, 1849.

'HIGHLY HONOURED SOVEREIGN DUKE! MOST GRACIOUS SIR!—Your Highness's honoured letter of the 16th inst. has

reached me, and I have pleasure in expressing my hearty thanks for the lively interest expressed therein, recognising also the weight of the reason given by Your Highness for yielding on our part.

'I shall soon take the liberty of sending Your Highness the enclosed documents which have been drawn up during the past few weeks. Your Highness will see from them that we at once established preservative measures in Berlin, but after that we addressed a Circular Note to all the Governments of Germany, amongst them to that of Your Highness.

'It is indeed possible, that the German Governments are not at present in a position to give us further material help, but we may certainly expect advice and intercession. We also consider it our unavoidable duty to inquire of Germany, before we give up the struggle undertaken as Germans and with Germany. It is to be hoped that even Prussia will perceive the necessity of this step, and will therefore not feel offended, particularly as bitterness of any kind against Prussia has been sedulously avoided in our expressions.

'That our cause is in the greatest danger, cannot fail to be recognised, all the more, as the Government must show great energy on the one hand, in order to keep the leadership of the country and the army in their own hands, while admitting nothing which might unnecessarily offend, in order, in case we are deserted by all our Confederate allies, not to cut off all possibility of speedy mediation. The present want of an effective Central Power in Germany greatly increases our difficulties.

'Your Highness's kind offer to work further for our cause, especially in England, as far as lies in your power, I accept with the heartiest thanks.

'We allow ourselves to hope that Your Highness's powerful help, and the feeling that the Duchies have had a hard duty assigned to them after their honest efforts to fight with good courage, will succeed in gaining more inclination for us.

'Our hopes now rest upon the fact that, according to the text of the Prussian preliminaries of peace, more has been granted the Danes than was contained in the basis of peace

proposed by England and the Provisory Central Power, and that it might therefore be possible to interpret it more favourably, especially the words "political union." Should this succeed, there is a possibility of a quiet development; should it not succeed, there is at present no peaceable way out to be seen.

'Your Highness remarks, that we should not cast off the Augustenburgers; I can assure you that this intention is far from my mind, as from that of all my friends. Our struggle is being carried on no less for the rights of the House of Augustenburg than for the rights of the country, their cause is ours. Only the fear that the Danes might insinuate that our revolt was really owing to the ambitious plans of the Augustenburgers, has caused us, in the interests of the House of Augustenburg, to place the Duke of Augustenburg as little in evidence as possible. We glady seize every opportunity of being useful to the House of Augustenburg and, thereby, to the country, and we shall feel ourselves greatly indebted to Your Highness if you can suggest ways and means to us.

'Finally, I again express to Your Highness my earnest thanks for the active share in our struggle and the warm sympathy for our cause. Our cause cannot be a bad one, when the best Princes and men of Germany adopt it. If in the present unfortunate disturbance in Germany, our cause must also fail at present, yet I do not lose all hope that Germany will yet again take courage, and that our cause will then come forth victorious. With the greatest respect and devotion Your Highness's Most Obedient

'REVENTLOW.'

The hopes placed on the German Governments were naturally shown in their full nullity, even before I had left the boundaries of Holstein. It is only too well known how each and everyone of the Princes and Ministers of the smaller and middle States were forced, with the greatest regret, it is true, but decidedly, to refuse to do anything further for the sea-encircled brother race.

But the manner in which the Government of Stadtholders

acquired this certainty is so indicative of the times, that I may be allowed, at the risk of trying the reader's patience, to insert here something from Harbou's despatches, containing information concerning the mission of his agents:

'News at length arrived to-day,' wrote Harbou on July 26, 'from Francke at Munich and Baron Liliencron at Brunswick. The first reports, that he arrived in Munich on the 20th inst., and at once had a conference with Minister von Pfordten, as well as an audience with the King on the following day. The Prussian Government has already motioned for the consent of Bavaria to the treaty; but on the 20th an official refusal was sent to Berlin, which was partly explained on the grounds that the Central Power alone was authorised to make such conventions, partly by the material contents of the treaty, to which Bavaria would be forced to refuse her consent.

'Minister von der Pfordten, who gave Herr Francke this information, added at the same time that the Prince of Altenburg had already received orders to withdraw the Bavarian contingent, because it was feared that the Duchies would eventually have to fight Prussia, as they had too often been deluded by Count Brandenburg to be able to place any faith in his assurance that Prussia would really withdraw her troops in case of actual opposition. Besides this, it was feared that Denmark would be supported by Sweden, Russia, England and France.

'Bavaria was also less able to do without her troops, as there was every probability of a war between Austria and Bavaria against Prussia, on account of the German questions. Only in case Prussia remained neutral could Bavaria possibly yield to a request from the Central Power to have her troops in Schleswig-Holstein. The King spoke to the same effect.

'The reports which arrived to-day from Baron Liliencron and Herr Reiche concerning the negotiations with the Government of Brunswick are equally unsatisfactory. On conferring with Minister von Schleinitz, a brother of the Prussian Minister, as well as with the other Ministers, on the 20th and 21st inst., and a lengthy conversation with the Duke of

Blankenburg on the 22nd, I found that great interest was felt in Brunswick for our cause, and much goodwill, but that considering the position of things in Germany, they did not think it possible to come forward actively in our favour, as they consider it a necessity to join with Prussia, who is supposed to have good intentions as regards the peace soon to be settled.

'At the same time Russian intervention is feared, and they therefore declare decidedly that they cannot do anything for us at the present moment. On the other hand, they do not intend at once to send a consent to Berlin, they prefer to wait for the events and occurrences of the immediate future. The Duke has personally spoken of effective military help, as soon as the proper time arrives. The enthusiasm of the people for our interests is said to be very great. Volunteers have sent in their names to the envoys, and the Assembly of representatives will probably make a proposal in our favour, but without any real success.

'Count Baudissin returned yesterday from Oldenburg, but brought as little consolation with him as the others. Minister Schleufer speaks with the greatest bitterness of Prussia's conduct, but would promise direct help on account of Oldenburg's envious position between Hanover and Prussia. The Grand Duke, who sees the chief rights of the Duchies in the hereditary claims of the male line, is quieted as an agnate by Prussia's notice that Denmark has to a certain degree taken back the Open Letter, and declared the succession doubtful, and pretends that the Duchies ought to be glad to get out of the March business so cheaply. Tears and assurances of sympathy have certainly not been refused us, but the troops of Altenburg are withdrawn.

'According to information of the 24th from Stemann from Cassel, indignation prevails there at Prussia's conduct, and sympathy for the Duchies; at the same time there is a conviction that the Electorate of Hesse alone would not be in a condition to furnish the energetic support which she would like. But the Ministry would under no circumstances allow the sympathy openly expressed by the Elector of Hesse for

the Danes to influence the cause, they would rather make this matter a Cabinet question.

'On the following day a despatch informed us: "Herr Francke has reported to the Stadtholders from Stuttgart, on the 24th, that he has gone from bad to worse in the negotiations of Munich. The King, in an audience, had not only openly expressed his dissatisfaction with everything that had occurred in Frankfort, but at the same time declared his conviction that Germany only goes as far as the Eider, he had only sent troops to Schleswig-Holstein because urged thereto by the Central Power; and Denmark must remain a bulwark against Russia; he could on no account help, and the Duchies must try to make peace as well as they could. Baron Liliencron has returned from Dresden without having obtained anything more than fine words."'

But I will now interrupt the repetition of the mistakes made by the Government of Stadtholders. Most Governments desired to make use of this affair in order to get up as much bad feeling as possible against Prussia, but they were really glad that the revolutionary land of the North was now quieter and subdued.

Whoever understood anything of the great coherence of the Cabinets, sighed for peace. Reventlow-Altenhoff came back also and advised quiet and compliance. For my part, I was convinced that what ought to be saved for the future in the Duchies would only be able to be won through dynastic interests, to which the family of Augustenburg had claims. I had therefore a last piece of advice, as it were, to give Count Reventlow-Altenhoff, pointing out immediately before my departure how useful it would be if the Duke of Augustenburg himself would go to London. He must have found an opportunity there, through my brother, who would certainly have received him most cordially, to obtain a great deal of influence.

It is significant of the dulness which prevailed in Schleswig-Holstein as far as this affair was concerned, that Count Reventlow at once informed me that the Duke of Augustenburg could not easily decide on such a journey unless he

received an express invitation from the English Court. Reventlow himself was sufficiently experienced to see the impossibility of such an invitation to a visit which, according to English views, could not but be regarded as a political affair.

When it was too late for everything, Prince von Noer addressed himself to the Queen, to have his honour, attacked by the Danes, restored by a jury of English gentlemen. Even then the form which he proposed was not very practical, and hardly to be expected of an English Cabinet.* Had the excellent Princes earlier sought for better relations in England, on their own account, it would hardly have been conceivable that the fall they experienced then would have been so far and so hard.

Meantime all the orders had arrived from the Chief Command to withdraw the Imperial contingents, and with them the reserve brigade. The latter was to begin to march off on the 24th of July. On the 19th, Prittwitz bade farewell to the troops with cool, one might say, forced words, and nothing was more characteristic of the joyless retreat than the close of the order of the day, which ran thus:

'Finally, I must call attention to the fact that possibly, and probably, the troops will hear unfavourable judgments of the decisions and share taken by their Governments in the measure adopted to close the war. The soldier, from the highest officer down to the lowest grade, is bound, however, to avoid such utterances, to hold opinions of the measures adopted by the Governments entirely apart from the limits of his sphere of activity, and preserve here also the cardinal virtue of the soldier, implicit obedience.'

At the breaking up of the brigade I handed over the command to Colonel von Buch, and went to General von Prittwitz, in order to take leave in person. His headquarters were still at Veile in Jutland, and the journey thither was all the more rewarded, as it offered me an opportunity of speaking to Prittwitz and Bonin one after the other.

* The Queen could of course do nothing beyond the giving letter for official consideration, to Lord Palmerston who announced that he could not grant the Prince's wishes.

They were entirely of the same opinion concerning the political situation, but regarded what had just occurred all the more differently as far as military, as well as diplomatic affairs were concerned.

Immediately after the conclusion of the armistice, Prittwitz had declared to the Government of Stadtholders that he obeyed no orders besides those of his King, and Bonin had also pointed out the simple necessity of being obliged to leave the service of Schleswig-Holstein, under existing circumstances.

Prittwitz had full power to summon the recall of all Prussian officers from the Duchies, and Bonin was not in the least inclined to oppose such an order. The Stadtholders wanted again to attempt to obtain permission in Berlin for their generals to remain; but even the members of the Government of Schleswig-Holstein were doubtful as to whether such a request would be granted.

When I came to General Prittwitz I found him very indignant against the Government of Stadtholders, the enemy of Schleswig-Holstein and the whole campaign, which had only brought him vexation and but little honour. No one had played his part to anyone's liking. The delicate commissions of his Government would have been too difficult to perform, and he had had nothing but unpleasantness from the Schleswig-Holsteiners. His best intentions had been foiled by the obstinacy and the opposition of the Stadtholders and General Bonin, who had always thought only of himself and his renown. He spoke of Fridericia and assured me that he had repeatedly warned Bonin. As a reward for what Prussia had done for the Duchies, he and the whole army had been atrociously calumniated.*

On the following day I visited Bonin on the return journey, who represented it as a certain fact that he had guiltlessly been drawn into ruin. He related all kinds of details con-

* I do not think proper to enter into the remarks of Councillor of Justice von Schleiden or the disputed questions which were explained first by the North German *Free Press* of the 1st of August, then in manifold works by Lüders, Baudissin, Fock, and others, concerning the conduct of Prittwitz. That Fock relates that Prittwitz was prevented by the hospital doctors from visiting the wounded because the bitterness was too great is not entirely incredible. I found him in a most explicable state of excitement about it, which was highly to be regretted.

cerning the treatment which Prittwitz had bestowed upon him, and laid the whole blame of Fridericia on the Chief Command. I need not say what an inexpressibly sad impression this opposition between the two Generals made on me.

One found consolation only in the sight of the fine troops who, after the misfortune of the first few days, had remained entirely unbroken, and full of the heartiest belief in the future of the country, had begun their diplomatic retreat. At Kolding I witnessed the arrival of the first infantry corps of Schleswig-Holstein, under Major Wrangel, a cousin of the General's, who proved himself a brave and clear-sighted General in the campaigns afterwards so glorious for us, and gave me all kinds of details concerning the battle of Fridericia. They were ineffaceable and really elevating memories which I was to take back home with me of the bed of pain of these brave men belonging to the unfortunate brother race.

On my return on the 29th of July from Jutland, I found my brigade still in Holstein. It stood by the village of Burgwedel, where the roads of Kiel and Segeberg join in the direction of Altona, in a united position for the last time. Only the second Hanseatic squadrons had marched away directly. I took leave of the troops here, and as my words spoken on horseback were noted down by friendly officers, they should not, even if without any importance whatever, fail to be reproduced in these recollections.

'As according to the order of the Commander-in-Chief the reserve brigade is to be relieved from the union it has hitherto held, I bid all the officers, non-commissioned officers and men a hearty farewell.

'May the four months of our union have contributed to preserve the feeling of comradeship in the different directions in which the home of each stands, the memory of the command of the brigade will also cause me to look back on this time with honest pleasure, and I add to it the hopes and wish that a feeling of comradeship may always be felt for me.'

Meantime I was not to leave the Duchies without gaining

a better experience of the frightfully excited feeling which prevailed everywhere. In Altona I found so hostile a spirit amongst the people that I could not doubt that it would come to a conflict during the march past of the troops. It was therefore my painful duty to adopt a defensive attitude against the town and its inhabitants. Every precautionary measure had to be taken. I had the public localities occupied and two battalions bivouacked in the squares. Strong patrols rode through the town during the night. I myself remained dressed during the whole night and was very glad next day when the troops embarked in the train for different points unmolested and without abuse.

How necessary the energetic precautionary measures taken by me were, was shown several days later, when the Prussian troops occupied Altona. A bloody insurrection followed, and many a brave comrade who had honourably stood up against the Danes, met his death at the hands of a German, amongst others some of the horsemen of the Hamburg squadron.

I immediately went to Berlin, for after all the singular reports which had arrived like shadows from the Prussian capital during my long stay in camp, as if they were intended to make pessimism and melancholy a part of the German national character, I wished personally to see and hear, I desired to convince myself of what was going on here and what they had begun to contrive.

I announced my presence immediately on my arrival at Sans-Souci, where the King was staying. Extraordinary as was much which I had seen in Frederick William, the reception I received there made an indelible impression on me. He asked me, as if he had not heard anything of me for the greatest length of time, whence I came, where I had been, and why I had not been to Berlin for so long a time. But without waiting for an answer he burst into a flood of words about the bad times, in which nothing was sound but his army.

Not a syllable was uttered concerning Schleswig-Holstein. During the long dinner at Sans-Souci they most anxiously avoided on all sides to speak of the campaign in Schleswig, or

to touch on the question which was regarded throughout Germany, at this moment, as a burning wound. At the royal table not a single word of sympathy was let fall for this German cause, in which even the Prussian army took part, and for which so much German blood had already flowed. The King spoke in the most easy way of his last meeting with the King of Denmark.

On the homeward journey to Berlin, Wrangel and Humbold seated themselves in my coupe, both expressing their interest in my war adventures in the most friendly words. That a good German cause should now be trampled under foot by the smallest and most unimportant of hereditary enemies was, according to the opinion of an active portion of Berlin society, on a par with the uproar which radicalism had raised in Baden in union with mutinous soldiers.

The volcanic atmosphere of Berlin was not the thing for me this time, and I left as quickly as possible, met my battalion again at Halle, and entered Gotha with it on the 3rd of August. I had, as I have already related in a former chapter, forbidden rejoicings of any kind, and they contented themselves with joyous acclamations from thousands of throats.

'The feeling alone,' I was able to write to my brother at that time, 'particularly for my person, is better than it ever was before. This has shown itself on many occasions, and would be some compensation for a great deal of what I have gone through, did one not know how changeable everything is.'

In the month of May I had received the Commander's Cross of the royal Saxon Order of Henry for my services in the field; it was characteristic of the feeling in Berlin, that in the autumn, without any personal co-operation of his Majesty the King, the Order of merit which was conferred upon me at the instance of General von Prittwitz, was sent to me.

Although I devoted much further activity, to the development of the affairs of Schleswig-Holstein after my return home, as far as lay in the power of a simple German Prince, yet my immediate relations to the sad events of the next year

in the Duchies, were I might almost say, luckily, interrupted. Nevertheless I cannot refrain from reproducing here the outlines of even well-known facts, because in this way it will be possible to understand those few points in which I was called on to co-operate personally, and was in a position to do so.

The external occurrences in Schleswig-Holstein from August 1849 to August 1850 are extremely easy to understand in their touching simplicity and their painful consequences, but have been, with their deeper sources and personal motives, the object of lively controversy.

The heroic attempt of a deserted nation to defend its just rights to the last with their own hands and through their own strength, speaks too plainly for itself, for even the reactionary adversaries of the unhappy cause have not dared simply to hinder the bloody execution of this affair of honour; but in the midst of the European reaction of 1850 it was not to be wondered at that even the friends of Schleswig-Holstein had a feeling that it was only a case of their honourable downfall.

The Government of Stadtholders were in the most unfavourable possible position in the world for their measures and preparations for this last deed of arms. Whilst it was being demanded of them that they should seize all revolutionary means for the attainment of their object, they did not think themselves justified for a moment in abandoning the strictest limits of legal conduct, out of respect for half-friendly governments. They demanded a revolt *en masse*, the adoption of Polish and Hungarian officers, the formation of foreign legions, the introduction of all the revolutionary elements which had just been suppressed in Baden, in the Palatine, in Hungary and in Italy. The Stadtholders, on the other hand, would, and should, as before, avoid the slightest appearance of uniting their cause with that of the rebels. In their offers of peace and their war they played until the end the part at first adopted, of entire subjection to their Sovereign and Royal Duke.

Various historical descriptions have represented the cessation of the Schleswig-Holstein struggle solely from the point of view that the half-heartedness and weakness of the Stadt-

holders had been the cause of everything. Even at the present time there is an extensive opinion that Schleswig-Holstein would have been saved if the advice of the progressive party of the country, the Extreme Left in the National Assembly, had been followed.

Although I could on no account undertake to defend Reventlow and Beseler, yet, according to good information received at that time, I think it right to make a remark which must be thoroughly considered. On the point of the resistance against the radical and revolutionary flooding of the country after the Berlin armistice, the Government of Stadtholders had no choice.

It was a settled affair, that on the day when the Stadtholders should make a change of this kind, steps would at once be taken against them in the name of the German Confederacy. As an appeal had been made with reference to the armistice to the plenipotence of the Central Power, although the latter was no longer recognised as such, they were also decided in their name eventually to strip the Government of Stadtholders of its power by means of our already prepared decree.

Then the execution of the year 1851 would already have resulted in 1849, and the revolution would have been suppressed on account of the Confederacy, as in other lands. Whether and what expressed guarantees the Government of Stadtholders gave in Berlin for their conduct, it is impossible for me to decide at this day. But the matter was most closely connected with the delay in the order to recall the Prussian officers.

As I have already remarked, in July the Government of Stadtholders had, on the departure of the troops, applied in Berlin for Bonin to be allowed to remain longer in the service of Schleswig-Holstein. Up to a certain point the Prussian Government showed their willingness to support the Stadtholders. Many Prussian officers remained in the army, and the Government of Stadtholders took care that all revolutionary European elements should be kept at a distance.

How useless and unimportant the criticism of things was on the part of that party which under the battle-cry of

powerful measures, made itself heard in the winter of 1849-50 in the National Assembly, the representation assemblies and clubs, hardly needs any further proof. On the other hand, the reproaches against the Government of Stadtholders were doubtless to be taken more in earnest, made as they were by thinking men, who wished to know that the organisation and leadership of the army had been definitely entrusted to Bonin and the Prussian officers.

Amongst these were the Baudissins. Count Adalbert Baudissin has given special utterance in his thoroughly careful work concerning the war of Schleswig-Holstein, to the conviction that Bonin and the most prominent leaders of the army would have left the Prussian service and have remained in Holstein, had their future been more certainly assured by suitable endowments.

As no price would have been too high for Bonin as organiser of the Schleswig-Holstein army, and as the means which stood at the disposal of the Stadtholders would certainly have sufficed, it must have appeared tragi-comical if so great a cause had been lost through the petty economy and the narrow common notions of money of the Government of this land. The truth should nevertheless be acknowledged, that no proofs have been furnished of Bonin's inclination to linger in Schleswig-Holstein under existing circumstances; and amongst the reasons which were otherwise decisive for the Government of Stadtholders at that moment, there was this, that Bonin had never been very popular in Holstein, because he was too certain and decided a person.

I must, on the other hand, give expression to another opinion, very wide-spread at that time. In many political circles, especially in London, it was thought that these men governing at Kiel had been forced to throw themselves unconditionally and inconsiderately into Prussia's arms. Bunsen still inspired a universal hope in London that the King and the Prussian Government would allow their policy to be altered if more liking for them, more complete yielding and the closest alliance were shown.

That the Government of Stadtholders adopted a somewhat

wavering attitude on German questions, as they showed themselves in the spring of 1850, that they even clung to certain Frankfort velleities and even still thought that they must not spoil their game with Austria, is true and undeniable. Even if I understood that according to all precedents, Prussia could not expect much confidence in Holstein, yet the Government of Stadtholders should not have concealed the fact that nothing and no remedy was to be sought for their cause outside the union of Princes who were on the point of pressing more closely around Prussia.

Willingly as one admits that the situation of the Stadtholders was really an extraordinarily difficult one, yet it afforded no pleasing view to anyone. One expected deeds, or at least a firm political attitude; but what one saw of the measures adopted by the Government everywhere resembled an egg dance performed with more or less skill, in which even the publicity of parliamentary transactions was fought shy of.

Whilst the strength of the Government of Holstein began to decrease, the complaints and *vae victis* of the Brothers of Schleswig penetrated more and more loudly through the boundary-lines. In Holstein the army, and in Schleswig the acts of violence of the Danish-Prussian rulers increased daily. New men were sent in every day, new cannon cast, and the Government daily demanded greater abstinence and reserve on the part of the people. Hardly an angry word might be spoken against the Danes, no cry of indignation at what occurred on the other side of the Eider might be uttered. The Government were getting ready for war, and suppressing the feeling in favour of it.

After the Government of Stadtholders and all the departments of the Government moved over to Kiel on August 25th, 1849, the so-called Provincial Administration came into activity. It had been introduced by the Prussian Chief President Bonin and the Danish Privy Conference Councillor von Pechlin, and consisted of Count Eulenburg, sent by the Prussian Government, and the Danish Cabinet Secretary von Tillisch; the English Consul Hodges had been nominated to the Administrative Commission by the English Government,

which led the umpirage. At its introduction the Danes refused plainly enough to use the title of the King of Denmark as Duke of Schleswig, although Chief President Bonin had insisted upon its being mentioned. Even as regarded such petty formalities, the Prussia of those days was not in a position to insist upon anything being carried out by a Power like that of Denmark. It was the same thing with regard to the relations between Eulenburg and Tillisch.

The former was so little in a position to prevent or even to moderate the excessiveness and violence of the latter, that even in Berlin they were surprised at the way things went on.

On the 27th of August the King of Denmark issued a proclamation in the German and Danish languages to the inhabitants of Schleswig, which bore the tone of a conqueror of rebels, and promised consideration and forgetfulness to the subjects, who had followed bad courses, but had been taught better by sad experience, if they would honestly return to their King.

After a few months steps had been taken in Schleswig to remove all clergymen and officials, all the authorities and judges, who had not unconditionally humbled themselves, and the state of the country was that of a subdued province. In the south of Schleswig, it is true, the Prussian garrison placed there to carry into execution the orders of Government did not offer their hand as the Swedish troops did in the north of the country; nevertheless the Danish thirst for revenge always knew where to find the individual men whom it wished to strike. In spite of this predominance on the part of the Danish Commissioner over that of Prussia, single individuals and communities decided to present petitions and addresses to the King of Prussia in order to point out the dangers which threatened the German nation if the peace was really concluded according to the meaning of the protocol of July 10th. It should not be said that they were not aware in Berlin of what Denmark did and what she was further preparing to do.

As early as in January 1850 Esmarch had handed in an excellent documentary comparison of the actions of the Flensburg Government, and collected proofs of the tenacity with

which, even at this moment, the German populations in Schleswig clung to their cause.

Baudissin, in his much talked of, thorough work, afterwards enumerated all the particulars of the Schleswig history of suffering, as they occurred, and I will content myself with referring the reader to these books.

Less is thought and known of the conduct of the Danes with regard to the Augustenburg possessions in Schleswig, which were immediately sequestrated, and confiscated, apparently with the intention of forcing Duke Christian Augustus by this means to renounce his rights. On this occasion the Duke addressed himself to me, and as the negotiations concerning the German constitution had been set going by the personal share taken by the Princes in May 1850, I had also an opportunity of referring on more than one side to the situation of this badly treated German Princely family. The letter of Duke Christian Augustus will be of such great use to the reader, as well with regard to the state of affairs in Schleswig-Holstein as in respect of the position of the country and the Duke regarding the great German question of union, that I have but little to add, although the latter will only be treated in their whole connexion in the ensuing chapter.

'YOUR HIGHNESS will allow me to offer you my thanks for your very friendly letter, which I would have done before had I not been indisposed for some time past. If I take up my pen to-day in order to write to you, most gracious sir, it is particularly in order to express to you my pleasure at the fact that your patriotic efforts have been crowned with success in bringing about an assembly of a portion of the German Princes.

'May this step assure Germany's welfare. At any rate, you have the satisfaction of having promoted what promises to do so much good, and your name will shine like a bright spot in the mist which conceals the future. If the Princes of Germany would only hold together with unanimity and courage, both internal and external foes would soon be overcome. But all is being lost through discord and weakness

and we are falling into the hand of the red Republic or the Russians.

'As regards our position in the Duchies, it is a very singular one, since we are now threatened with a Russian intervention, favoured by England. I am afraid neither of Russians nor of Danes, as long as Germany undertakes nothing against us, for we can keep off the enemy with our army.

'But Denmark is intriguing greatly with Austria, and hopes, by means of Austria's help, to cause the Central Power to be installed by Germany against us, or against Holstein, should the negotiations in Copenhagen lead to nothing. They are very much afraid of Russian help in Copenhagen and will do everything to get free from it. If our Government of Stadtholders were not so limited in their views, and wanting in any political insight, I would not be anxious as to a tolerably good ending, nevertheless, one must keep in with them, for no one knows who might take their place.

'You, most gracious sir, have always shown yourself to be a warm friend to our cause, and I dare to hope that, where you can, you will speak a good word for the rights of the Duchies and of my House. Also as regards my personal relations, I beg you to put in a word at the proper time for them. You know how the Danes have acted regarding my possessions and my income, and unless Prussia and England take care of me in this respect when the treaty of peace is concluded, the Danes will give me nothing. Their intentions are only too evident: to keep my possessions and my property, which they can have in their own hands, and only to restore them in return for concessions on my side, or my granting all their demands respecting the hereditary succession.

'Unless, when peace is concluded, a condition is made that Denmark shall restore my possessions and my stolen property to me, I shall never get it back again. Therefore, I wish all the more that it may be considered by either Germany or England.

'Excuse me, most gracious sir, for having allowed myself to represent this to you; the invariably friendly feeling, how-

ever, which you have always exhibited towards me, inspires me with the hope that you will receive this with consideration and kindness.

'Finally, I beg that your good feeling and kindness may not cease, and that you will at the same time accept the assurance of the high respect and honest devotion with which I remain Your Highness's devoted.

'CHR. AUGUSTUS
'D. OF SCHL.-HOLSTEIN.

'*Kiel, May 9th* 1850.'

That the attitude of the Danish Government towards the family of Augustenburg and their possessions was contrary to national law, and exceeded everything in violence which had occurred for a long time in European political life, could, in fact, be denied by no one. The documents which the Danish Government had drawn up in order to give reasons for and proof of the supposed treachery of the Duke and his brother and the immediate confiscation of their income made no impression in Germany; in England, however, in spite of the resistance of the Queen and my brother, the Ministry persisted in their unfriendly steps against Schleswig-Holstein and their Princes.

The situation was so desperate, that Prince Albert had really been much more hopeless for some time than may have appeared to Bunsen from what he says in his 'Life.' Already since the beginning of 1850 he had entirely given up fighting against the myriads of lies and intrigues which had been directed against the cause of Schleswig-Holstein and particularly against the Augustenburgers.

It was not in his nature to endanger his influence for what seemed to him a lost cause. His clear comprehension of things crippled his kindness of heart. With the laconism which was peculiar to him in such cases he wrote me the following brief and remarkable words:

'Regarding the Schleswig cause, the Great Powers are determined to cheat Germany grossly. Farewell, etc.—*Buckingham Palace, April 30th*, 1850.' If, in his intercourse with

Bunsen and Stockmar, Albert fully maintained his interest in the good cause, yet it was more on account of the appeal it made to his feelings and wishes, than to his understanding and action.

As, in this way, all the hopes of the Augustenburgers must be destroyed by the opposition of the people and the Ministry, in Prussia also, an unfavourable feeling was soon to show itself. Under these circumstances, the part which Duke Christian Augustus played in the National Assembly at Kiel during the year 1850, was a most thankless one.

Continually regarded by the liberal and radical elements of the Assembly as a hindrance to the powerful measures desired by them, and consequently treated with mistrust, in many of the highest circles in Germany it was considered a crime that the unfortunate Prince did not withdraw from the whole affair. And whereas, according to the Duke's whole manner of thinking, his actions were solely and entirely the result of the strongest legitimate principles, misunderstandings in the Court-air of Berlin turned him into a kind of revolutionist.

When, in April 1850, things had arrived in the National Assembly at the point of an angry attack against the Government concerning the question of the declaration of war against Denmark, the Duke of Augustenburg had used his influence in favour of another immediate attempt to make peace with the King of Denmark. His representations did not succeed, he had to yield to the stronger party, and suffered, together with his Government, a painful defeat in the House, which made his position still more fatal. The worst was, that he now appeared before the world as powerless and devoid of influence with his own subjects, and that his legitimate claims were thereby compromised.

Although the Stadtholders were by no means in accord with the National Assembly, they nevertheless, before more powerful means were to be applied, made a last attempt in April to arrive at an understanding with the Danish Government, and issued a circular note to all the German Governments on the 20th of April, in which they prominently set

forth their love of peace and attempted to prove that no means had been left untried in order to become reconciled with the King-Duke.

I must not omit here, for the sake of connexion, to recall in a few words the negotiations which the Government of Stadtholders had been trying to establish since November 1849, in Copenhagen,

In consequence of a letter which Reventlow and Beseler personally addressed to King Frederick III on the 16th of November, a choice was to be made of three proxies: Chief Judge of the Supreme Court Mommsen, State-Syndic Prehn, and Dr Steindorff, who, without being allowed to appear as the plenipotentiaries of the Government of Stadtholders, were to make proposals for the restoration of peaceable relations between sovereign and subject. But already at the end of January these projects of reconciliation were regarded as fruitless.

Under these circumstances the April transactions in Copenhagen, which were personally conducted by Count Reventlow-Farve, Heinzelmann and Prehn, were begun hopelessly enough, and there can hardly be any doubt that their principal aim could only be to give, in this way, official information of the lowest demands of Schleswig-Holstein.

'The proxies were,' as it says in the printed report of the Stadtholders,* 'on April 24th graciously and pleasantly received by the sovereign, His Majesty the King-Duke. But they waited during weeks for the desired conference with the Danish Ministry, the sole possible way in which to reach their aims, as German statesmen do not support the sovereign with counsels.

'The proxies were desired to make a positive declaration that they were not to be considered deputies of the Government of Stadtholders. In their love of peace they made this declaration, and, led by the same motive, not being in a position to bring the proposals of the Stadtholders to the throne, they mentioned a kind of union, the basis of which

* Documents concerning the Schleswig-Holstein question, three books. The negotiations for peace at Copenhagen. In Baudissin's book also the rolls are tolerably completely collected and reproduced.

does not correspond to the rights of the Duchies, and which was therefore not from the Government of Stadtholders. The interview hereupon granted with the individual members of the Danish Ministry had therefore only resulted in putting a speedy end to the conference; as proposals were made on the Danish side, concerning things as well as persons, which went far beyond the rights as well as the interests and welfare of the Duchies, and entirely lost sight of even the points brought forward for explanation by the proxies.

'The envoys left Copenhagen, after handing in a document addressed to the King, for the purpose of justifying their attitude. Count von Reventlow-Farve sacrificed himself to his desire for reconciliation by remaining still longer in Copenhagen, waiting for an answer. After a short delay notice was sent him on the 13th inst. in the name of the Danish Ministry, that he also must leave Copenhagen.'

This is the short official report of June 26th, 1850, which, with the addition of the principal Documents, was to furnish a proof that the Duchies had done all they could in order to establish peace instead of a new struggle. War was unavoidable, but, judged from a political point of view, it came too late. For on the 2nd of July the Prussian Government concluded the Treaty of Berlin, which restored the position of things as they were before the war, without affirming the rights of Schleswig, and reserved all rights, at the same time deciding the evacuation of Schleswig by the Prussian troops.

The worst, however, was the Article IV of the so-called treaty of peace, which made it free to the King of Denmark, as Duke of Holstein, according to German Confederate rights, to demand at any time the intervention of the Confederacy in the pacification of the country, for the legitimate restoration of his power in Holstein, as a German Confederate State.

In this way the war could only bring extraordinary success for Schleswig-Holstein through a very fortunate event. But that which the Duke of Augustenburg regarded as an unfavourable turn in his above-mentioned letter, was in any case to be expected after the peace of Berlin, the Confederate ex-

ecutive threatened both victorious and conquered Holstein equally.

Prussia had added a note of explanation to the instrument of peace, and distributed it to the Government of Stadtholders as well as to all the German Governments. In this document she lays decided claim to having concluded peace in the name of the German Confederacy, and points out the advantages which Germany would have gained from the peace; for instance, that Holstein could unite with Lauenburg in adopting the change in the German constitution as she was at that time assured that the non-political links of material interests would be maintained between Schleswig and Holstein.

The full competency of the Confederacy in regard to the union between the King of Denmark and the Duchy of Holstein remains, the note of explanation announced, preserved now and in the future for the German Confederacy. Without going into a complete explanation of the numerous diplomatic papers which were at once exchanged concerning the peace of Berlin, it may be gladly admitted that a better prospect may have opened to some of the Prussian statesman for the future of Schleswig-Holstein, when they allowed themselves to hope that Prussia would clothe the Confederacy in a new form.

Under the presupposition that a firmer union of the German States would result, that a Confederate State would be firmer, one could still think that the reservation of the peace of Berlin would prevent the Danes from entirely doing away with the rights of the country. Usedom, who mediated the Berlin treaty, belonged, at any rate, to that class of diplomatists who by no means believed that the Austrian intentions could come to anything behind the article of the Confederate execution.

Even in the beginning of July they had not buried all hopes of a Prussian leadership of the German Confederate State, and a small number of Berlin diplomatists therefore still retained the belief that the peace was really not unfavourable for Schleswig-Holstein. For my own part, I

did not share in this feeling. After I had become acquainted with the text of this fatal instrument of peace I at once wrote to my brother:

'It is frightful to wish to conclude the Schleswig business with such a peace. The cause is spoiled, and will now enter into a new period, from which it will be more difficult to extricate it than before. Prussia is playing a fearful part, and her foes are laughing in their sleeves. One would like to call out, as the Thuringian smith did to his landgrave: "O King, grow hard!" I have really learned incredible things in Frankfort; it is the real battlefield of politics.'

When I wrote these words on July 17th, the Prussians had already evacuated Schleswig in consequence of the conclusion of peace, and on the 14th the army of Holstein passed the frontier of the Duchy. Since the 8th of April it had stood under the chief command of General Willisen, whom the Government of Stadtholders had appointed in the room of Bonin, after the latter had been forced to retire on account of his position in the Prussian service. That the Government of Schleswig-Holstein could not in any case count on having the Prussian officers remain in the army for any length of time, was an open secret. But the provisory condition of the army had been allowed to continue as long as possible, because the choice of a successor to Bonin offered great difficulties.

The organisation of the army was Bonin's work, it was exceedingly difficult to obtain another man fit for the post. Prince von Noer had declared himself against the new arrangements, and Willisen also altered the order of things introduced by Bonin. The excess of military mistakes which became the order of the day since the spring of 1850 in the army of Schleswig-Holstein, would prevent even the most careful critic from accurately measuring these wants.

Immediately after the close of the war the liveliest controversies arose in military literature, and there was no absence of angry accusations and defence. As regards the choice of Willisen as Bonin's successor, it found but scanty approbation.

I was personally consulted by Count Reventlow with re-

gard to Willisen at the time of the Berlin Congress of Princes. In a secret conference requested by him, the Stadtholder asked me if I considered the General eventually fitted to retain the Chief Command in case of the expected war. When I replied that I considered his appointment one of the greatest mistakes which could be made in Schleswig-Holstein, the Count's angry astonishment knew no bounds. Nevertheless, when I quietly explained the reasons for my judgment, he left me very much depressed, and I have reason to believe that Count Reventlow deplored not having consulted me six or eight weeks earlier.

My opinion of the General really was not founded on a desire to depreciate. I mentioned at once that I highly esteemed the General as an author, and considered him, as well as his brothers, as being amongst the most prominently clever officers in Germany. Nevertheless the old General had not much of the true soldier in him. He would rather make an impression on such a one as being a man of the most dangerous doctrines. Should he have a command, one might be certain that his destructive criticism would turn against his own orders, and it could not fail that he would countermand an order the moment after he had issued it. I knew him and his two brothers too well to be able to mistake for a moment the fact that he was entirely unfitted for his position in Schleswig-Holstein, where even decided and strong willed men might waver at a decisive moment from the want of clearness and the difficulties existing in all relations.

To this was added a circumstance which made it appear as a particularly bad political mistake to have placed Willisen at the head of the army of Schleswig-Holstein. The General, who had become known more than ten years before through his essays on the Russo-Polish war, was regarded by the Emperor Nicholas as an obdurate and dangerous revolutionist, and he considered him in the light of a personal enemy.

As in Schleswig-Holstein resolute resistance was made against all Hungarian and political emigrants, out of consideration for the legitimate Powers, it might be called a peculiar mishap that a Prussian General who had retired under the disfavour

of his King should be chosen as Commander-in-Chief, upon whom the all-powerful Czar had his eye for many years as a friend of the Poles, and by whom he considered himself and the Russian army to have been insulted. But it was characteristic that Reventlow, who, with Beseler, had always acted as if the Government of Schleswig-Holstein must also observe the most delicate diplomatic consideration, had hardly any idea of all those things regarding the new commander, and was very much troubled when his eyes were opened. However, this did not prevent me from fully expressing to the Count my conviction that things would infallibly go wrong should they come to blows in Schleswig.

I will not go into particulars of the war here. If the Stadtholders had exercised a far greater influence over the operations as regarded Prittwitz and Bonin in the preceding year, as would have been desirable, they found in Willisen a General to whom the corresponding and diplomatising was a great source of personal satisfaction.

A few days after the frontiers had been passed a manifesto was published by the Government of Stadtholders, which was highly characteristic of the fondness for writing cherished by the whole Government of Schleswig-Holstein. This manifesto unique of its kind, filled twenty-three closely printed pages and enlarged on the question of rights and the political position with a thoroughness which was calculated to send the most enthusiastic patriot off to sleep.

Equally inexhaustible was Willisen in the concoction of letters and orders, and when the armies stood opposite one another, he attempted to try whether the war could not be put an end to by means of an exchange of notes with the Commanding General of the Danish army. Whilst, in his correspondence with the Stadtholders, before assuming the command, he appeared to have intended a kind of guerilla warfare. At the breaking out of war he was decided on assuming the defensive, and only left the position of Rendsburg on the strong urging of the Government, to return thither as quietly as possible after the unfortunate battle of Idstedt. The newer attacking movements brought about by the Government of

Stadtholders after long and painful negotiations with Willisen, failed, as is known, at Missunde and Friedrichstadt*. The retreat put an end to the war.

Careful and wise, as ever, the Danes preferred to leave the so-called pacification of the German Confederate State of Holstein to the German Great Powers. In the night of January 11, 1851, the National Assembly at Kiel, on the proposal of the Stadtholders, arrived at the decision, hard in its consequences, of humbling themselves to the Confederate commission. Beseler at once resigned, Count Reventlow carried on affairs until the end of the month. In spite of the commissioner's promise to the contrary, the Confederate execution was laid on Holstein, the brave army was dissolved and the country, tied hand and foot, given over to the revenge of the Danes.

The less Prussia's attitude could be understood, the more the King fortified himself with the idea that he had succeeded here also in putting an end to the revolution. In union with the Austrian policy, and in alliance with the Austrian troops, Frederick William IV, one may hope without having any notion of the consequences of this action, took the odium of the Confederate execution on himself.

As things meantime stood, the momentary external fall of the cause of Schleswig-Holstein had almost been overbid in its danger to the later development through the internal events of European diplomacy. It was therefore evident to me that the lever of opposition could only be applied to the international forum, where they were just on the point of betraying the future of the German land to Denmark. I found an opportunity of observing in some measure the attitude of the German Powers after the external fall of the Holstein cause in regard to these questions also, and will bring to light a few facts which have perhaps become less widely known.

To this end, one must remember that on the 2nd of August

* Willisen's defence was carried on in a perserverance worthy of consideration in literature, he himself appearing more than once in this way. It may be understood that I have no intention whatever of criticising the well-known books and essays.

1850 the London protocol had been concluded. Lord Palmerston first furnished the Prussian Ambassador with information concerning the intended contents of the same on July 2nd, the same day on which the treaty of peace was signed in Berlin.

Whilst the restoration of the same state of things had been decided as had existed before the breaking out of war here, the Danish protector in London, Russia and France, demanded a common declaration on the part of the English Government, according to which the succession in Denmark should be arranged in its full integrity solely on the ground of the preservation of this state. Not a word was mentioned regarding the German Confederacy and its rights, and Prussia was only invited to take part in the protocol for herself. On Palmerston's asking Bunsen whether he would be able to sign this union of the Powers, the latter refused any co-operation whatever. This delayed the settlement of the affair, and the protocol was signed by Russia, France and England only on the 2nd of August.

The contents of the protocol were far removed, however, from that loyal tendency, which the English Government had hitherto avoided in the Schleswig-Holstein business, and which the Queen had on more than one occasion pointed out as a matter of honour to a mediating Power.

The declaration of the three Powers really contained a full admission of the Russian aspirations to a protectorate of Denmark, and hardly bore out the idea of the balance of power in the Northern States of Europe, which the protocol mentioned.

No one besides the Emperor Nicholas could desire so forcible a solution of a question of legitimacy, no one besides himself had motioned for the same. Lord Palmerston had really been converted to this Russian conception of things during the course of another political question of those days. It will be remembered how the English Government had at that time got into a bad scrape through various excesses in the Orient, and particularly in Athens. The precipitation which Palmerston exhibited towards the Greek Government

had brought about a serious difference between England on the one hand and Russia in union with France on the other.

It was a question of the compensation of Don Pacifico, who became so celebrated through this affair, whose house and furniture had been destroyed by the orthodox mob of Athens, and for whose advantage Admiral Parker had to appear in the Bay of Salamis with fifteen ships. Under protest from Russia and France, the English laid an embargo on Greek merchant ships, the English envoy left Athens and betook himself to the Admiral's ship of the execution fleet.

This very small matter made a frightful noise in Europe, and furnished Lord Palmerston with an opportunity of making one of his most celebrated speeches in Parliament, and of celebrating a triumph of the most extraordinary kind in the Lower House.

With the invocation of the proud Roman words, '*civis Romanus sum*,' Palmerston aroused the English consciousness, and turned on his accusers, but the enthusiasm of his party would hardly have lasted long, and certainly not have saved his portfolio had he not already secretly made his peace with the Russian Brunnow, and been assured that the affair would have no further international consequences. Brunnow was quieted, the French yielded. Did Palmerston join this diplomatic truce at the price of Schleswig-Holstein ?

In fact, the whole world asked itself at that time whether there was not a perceptible connection between Don Pacifico and the London protocol ? But no one could give a certain answer. On the other hand, my brother had been able to furnish me with the positive assurance that the bargain between the Ministers was really concluded. The Emperor Nicholas set so much value on the declaration of the integrity of Denmark that Brunnow had received the commission to discontinue his diplomatic hostilities against Palmerston, and to accept the latter's invitations. But Schleswig-Holstein had to plead for the Jew Don Pacifico, as an indelible token of the part which Germany at that time played in the diplomatic world.

'The poor Schleswigers must now atone for everything,'

wrote my brother on the 9th of August, after the signing of the protocol, 'even the sins of our foreign angel, who has rebought Russia's and France's forfeited friendship with the protocol, at Germany's expense, and thus concluded the Greek bargain. It serves Germany right if she is despised by other countries, but woe to those who bear the blame; for all wrong is revenged on earth, sings the harper in *Wilhelm Meister*.'*

As the protocol was immediately refused by Prussia and Germany, everything depended on resisting it from the standpoint of the legitimate succession question. The juridical claims of the House of Augustenburg were the only anchor which could be thrown out, in order in some degree to turn the Danes against their efforts to establish unity. For if an advantage was drawn from the circumstance that the settled female succession would, according to the Danish royal law, come into force after the death of King Frederick, the right of succession of the Augustenburgers to the Danish throne was not to be doubted, in case the Hessian claims fell away with the death of the Landgravin Charlotte.

I united with several men, intimately acquainted with the State and hereditary rights of Denmark, and the researches which I had made in the matter, produced such favourable results for the Augustenburgers, that I at once resolved personally to represent this view of matters in a diplomatic way. Should Germany, and, first of all, Prussia agree with my opinion, we would be in a position to aim a deadly blow at the Danish ideas of unity and a united State, or at least to disturb the beautiful harmony between the great Powers.

Considering the superabundance of deduction of rights which have assuredly become familiar to everyone in respect of the Danish hereditary succession, I will only bring forward a few clauses from my memorial, in the composition of which I was aided by a very excellent lawyer. This document showed that the integrity of the wished for monarchy and the

* The remarkable connection between Don Pacifico and the London protocol remained for a long time entirely unconsidered, or unknown. It was all the more interesting to me that Count Vitzthum could also affirm the fact in his Memoirs. The above representation was written by me long before Vitzthum's work appeared.

quiet of the North, so much desired and recognised by the London protocol, could only be permanently ensured in case a point was aimed at in which all interests would coincide. This point was offered by the hereditary rights of the House of Augustenburg, which in regard to Schleswig and Holstein, entitled them to the Danish throne immediately after the Landgravin Charlotte of Hesse and the two hitherto childless daughters of King Frederick VII, who were all three already advanced in years.

I sent this state document personally to the King of Prussia, and officially to the Austrian Cabinet. I insert the original draught of my letter to the King here, as I no longer know whether the fair copy contained alterations or not.

'Most Gracious King,—Your Majesty will perhaps be impatient when you again see the handwriting of your most humble servant; but to whom can a German Prince better apply than to the King of Prussia? I take the liberty of submitting to Your Majesty a small memorial, with the request that you will read it, and hand it to your High States Ministry for examination. It treats of the succession question in Denmark and the Duchies, it is no party document, and my patriotic heart has no part in it, it has been kept perfectly neutral; my intention was, simply to lay before you the hereditary rights of the house of Augustenburg to the Danish throne, founded on the Danish royal law of 1665, and to point out the great dangers which are connected with it should it be desired to solve the problem of the maintenance of the integrity of the Danish united monarchy of that time, as is shown in the London protocol.

'The real aim of the document is not, however, that of wishing to obtain the future inheritance of the Danish Royal Crown for the House of Augustenburg, as the Duke of Augustenburg in no way longs for that Crown, but solely to raise hindrances to the efforts of the Danish Cabinet which it is not in a condition to set aside, if it continues in its present line of conduct. The Danish Cabinet has, mainly, if I may venture to employ such an expression, speculated happily on

the want of knowledge of the existing relations on the part of the Great Powers, and, with Russia's help, established the unlucky London protocol, which, as I hope, has not yet been signed by Your Majesty.

'It now appears necessary to push the Danish Cabinet from its position, and to refer it to an accommodation with the Duchies, which must bring about a division of Schleswig. I desired to gain this end by means of my memorial. Should the German Powers hold fast to the union of the Duchies, to the legitimate hereditary succession in the same, and the interpretations of the royal law given in my memorial, Denmark will certainly be forced at least to consent to an accommodation and the division of Schleswig. In this accommodation the Augustenburgers must let their just claims fall on the Danish throne, and Denmark relinquish the integrity of the monarchy maintained at that time. Both will be able to unite in dividing Schleswig between Denmark and Holstein. Your Majesty will graciously recollect that as early as the year 1848 a similar proposal for the division was brought forward by England, which, apart from some few modifications, was agreed to by Denmark and Russia; unfortunately that plan was frustrated by the want of political foresight of those men who at that time provisorily conducted the affairs of Government in the Duchies.

'According to my unprejudiced opinion they will finally have to return to a division of Schleswig arranged according to nationalities, if an enduring state of peace is to be established, as every other arrangement will certainly contain the kernel of a speedy dissolution.

'Your Majesty must accept this long epistle graciously, for out of the heart the mouth speaketh.—Your Majesty's etc., etc.'

I had a similar letter addressed to Prince Schwarzenburg, in which the neutral arguments were repeated word for word from my letter to the King, and soon received replies from both sides, which without doubt are of great historical interest in the course of Schleswig-Holstein affairs, and the many changes of Austria and Prussia in this matter.

It was highly characteristic that the reply of the King was sent from Warsaw on May 23rd, 1851.

'Most Illustrious Prince, Dear Friendly Cousin,—I send Your Highness my thanks for the communication of the memorial concerning the Danish hereditary succession question. According to the proposal which I have had sent in on the subject, the best founded doubts against the views expressed in this Memorial appear, it is true, to prevail, that the Landgravin Charlotte of Hesse, in case she should be called to the Danish throne after the extinction of the royal male line will not transfer the crown according to the determinations of the royal law on her descendants, but on the still living daughter of King Frederick VI, and, in this way, the succession to the throne would next fall to the Duke of Augustenburg. Meantime I entirely agree with Your Highness that the efforts for the maintenance of the integrity of the whole Danish monarchy, desirable as it is for the interests of Europe, must go hand in hand with the consideration of existing hereditary rights and the authority of the German Confederacy. It is with this aim that my Government, as far as it is called upon to take part in the further development of this affair, will follow the precepts for their co-operation in the negotiations.

'I beg Your Highness to accept renewed assurance of the particular esteem and friendship with which I remain Your Highness's friendly cousin,

'Frederick William.

'*Warsaw, May* 23, 1851.'

Thus, together with the date from Warsaw, it is decidedly said here that the King of Prussia also now considered the maintenance of the integrity of the Danish monarchy as being a European interest! The answer of the Austrian Minister, Prince Schwarzenburg was almost more favourable in comparison. Prince Felix wrote, hardly more than a week after the receipt of my Memorial:

'MOST GRACIOUS SIR,—I beg to express to Your Highness my most respectful thanks for the excellent proof of confidence with which you have thought fit to honour me by means of your gracious letter of the 13th inst. The great interest felt in the question of the Danish succession to the throne and the complications connected with it has made it of most particular value to me to learn the views exposed in Your Highness's letter and Memorial, which bears witness in so pleasing a manner at once to warm love for the cause of the fatherland and deep, earnest occupation in the tasks to be solved.

'According to the position the matter has hitherto assumed, the Imperial Cabinet, as Your Highness knows, has not yet been called upon to pass judgment on the different hereditary claims in question. It becomes the King of Denmark, as every sovereign, to take the initiative in the regulations of the disputed hereditary succession in lands governed by him, and the Powers, who have acknowledged this, cannot of their own accord express themselves concerning the various possible eventualities, important as it may appear to them, that an end should be put to the uncertainty which has already lasted only too long.

'Your Highness will therefore not fail to find sufficient excuse in my position, if I do not allow myself to go more warmly into the contents of the Memorial and limit myself to the assurance that the leading principles of right and legitimacy, from which Your Highness starts in the treatment of the question, are also recognised by me as the highest. Had I to convince myself that the London protocol, which Your Highness points out as unfortunate, is in opposition to these principles, the maintenance of which is the aim and end of all my efforts, I should be the first to admit my error; but I prefer to consider that declaration on the part of the Powers only as a simple and entirely legal expression of a certain given state of affairs.

'The Powers which have signed it look upon the coherence of the consistent portions of the Danish monarchy as desirable, they have therefore promised the King of Denmark to

support him in the assuredly very allowable effort to restore a universal hereditary succession in all his possessions.

'Austria's agreement with this protocol is particularly the result of the express preservation of rights of the German Confederacy, and perhaps Your Highness is not unaware of the fact, that at our desire all expressions of the original draft of the protocol already paragraphed by France, Russia, and England, in which anything prejudicial to the disputed questions of right might be perceived, were altered.

'Against Your Highness's conjecture, that Denmark has made use of the want of knowledge of the other Powers, with Russia's help, in order to carry the protocol, I think it necessary with all modesty to protest. That there is no doubt of the possibility of combination in and for itself, by means of which the different opposing claims might be justly equalised in the interest of the maintenance of the whole Danish monarchy, is what Your Highness yourself has undertaken to prove in a fixed direction in your work.

'Finally, if one inquires solely concerning the well understood interests of Germany in the whole affair, I shall at all times be prepared to take up the controversy in this field also. It is my conviction that it would be a very unsafe path, full of harsh disappointments, if one strives for a solution of the very ancient bond between Denmark and the Duchies, rendered perhaps probable by a doubtful departure, but hardly to be brought about without a Northern War, instead of following up the great advantages which this bond promises to preserve for Denmark by means of her existing relations and the German Confederacy:

'I allow myself in this subject to appeal to the truth so plainly explained by Your Highness, that the European interest by no means calls for a certain incompatible connection of the individual parts of the country with the ancient rights of the Duchies and the German interest.

'His Majesty, the Emperor, to whom I had the honour of performing the gracious commission, has commanded me to thank Your Highness most warmly for the friendly sentiments expressed in your letter, and to add the assurance

that His Majesty would have real pleasure in looking forward to a speedy personal acquaintance.

'I beg Your Highness to accept the assurance of the deep devotion with which I have the honour to be Your Highness's obedient and humble servant,

F. Schwarzenburg.

'*Vienna, April 15th.*'

Radowitz, to whom I sent some of these documents at Erfurt, where he was staying at the time, expressed himself curtly and very well in his answer, concerning the Schwarzenburg letter:

'Your Highness,—I do not fail most respectfully to return the letters confided to me. If Your Highness would have the graciousness to keep a copy of the Memorial for me, I would receive it very thankfully. It is a very forcible representation of the whole position of affairs, full of new points of view and striking arguments. One can boast concerning Prince Schwarzenburg's reply that it is cleverly enough drawn up, and goes around the essential principal point in a most excellent manner. With the truest and most respectful devotion.—Your Highness's most submissive Servant,

'J. Radowitz.

'*Erfurt, the 21st April* 1851.'

There could be no doubt that, in the stadium into which the Schleswig-Holstein affair had now entered in the eyes of the Great Powers, even dynastic and legitimate principles were no longer sufficiently strong in any degree to stay the powerful desire for a blunt policy of restoration.

The Confederate execution in Holstein was begun at the expense of every known means of restoration. If no opposing weight had been laid against the too nearly united German Great Powers, the pattern of the Bourbon Restoration in France would have been followed throughout. Insane persecution of officials and officers was not only the order of the day with the Danes, but the army of Holstein, and, most of all,

the German officers who had remained in it, were pitilessly plunged into misery.

My cousin Alexander Mensdorff was fortunately appointed Confederate Commissioner in Austria, by whose means I was able to furnish some help to many a man in the Duchies.

Several historical facts usually furnish, in their dumb tradition, very little information concerning the personal fates which follow in their wake. But I should consider my recollections of these events incomplete, if I did not say what an amount of deep misery was opened up to me in consequence of the fatal conclusion of this war, as hundreds of unfortunate men and families thought that my heart was with the German cause, and were of the opinion that I could help.

I have preserved the considerable number of letters full of misery and petitions which banished Schleswig-Holsteiners, or officers who, returning home, were thrust off by their own Governments, addressed to me. Many of these documents are loud accusations against a hard time of reaction. Prussia, most of all, had made herself remarkable for her harshness to all who had not immediately and unconditionally obeyed the recall from the army of Schleswig-Holstein. Others, whom Willisen had brought with him, and who were first obliged to give up the service, and even their claim to belong to the State, had become beggars in the real sense of the word. Many a good family name appears here in letters which could only have been dictated by the most extreme despair.

In Saxony and Hanover also they refused to take back those who had returned into the State service and the army. Much as military criticism may lay to the charge of Willisen's general staff, the treatment which was offered Major von Wynecken in Hanover may stand, not as a punishment for his faults, but as a martyrdom for his ability. Major-General von W——l would have been in the greatest need had it not been for my brother's help.

Still more unjust was the position of those who in 1848 and 1849 entered the service of Schleswig-Holstein with the full consent of their Governments, and were disabled during the campaign. The Government of Schleswig-Holstein natur-

ally only paid their pension up to 1851, and after the pacification their former service in the Prussian army afforded such men no help whatever in finding the most necessary means of support. 'Will Your Highness have the graciousness,' so ran the refrain in numberless letters from these unfortunates, 'to grant my request right speedily, for my family are in want, and this cannot but break an old soldier's heart.'

As regards the Schleswig-Holsteiners themselves, the Prussian Government had up to a certain point taken care of the banished professors and officials. Those who were too greatly compromised, or were regarded as too great revolutionists, such as Francke and many others, were made over to my Government, just as other small states and Princes had in this case shown themselves to be a tolerable help, in order to prevent the surplus liberalism from falling into utter despair.

But apart from the fact that even men, such as Lüders, were reduced to long petitioning for a place, the comparatively smaller number of men belonging to the highest classes had a better fate, generally speaking. What misery and bitterness was shown in somewhat lower ranks of society, might be told only by the emigrant ships, or the far too inadequate help societies, which, in spite of all difficulties, had been formed in the larger Governments. Amongst these classes of the excellent people of Schleswig-Holstein these years must have furnished dramatic material of unimagined greatness, and many a tragedy has remained undescribed of good men, whose conduct had nothing in it of political crime, but was the purest representation of right and the truest patriotism to the State.

Amongst this list of fateful lives I have recollections of men personally known to me, whose simple existence was not spared by the devastating storm. There is a Holstein head builder of roads, who attended to buildings for military purposes in 1848 and 1849. He built the redoubts of Eckernförde, and raised fortifications before Fridericia. Three years afterwards, as he was celebrating Christmas in Schleswig with his parents, the house was surrounded by the Danes, and the unfortunate man was taken to prison. No crime can be laid

to his charge, but he was obliged to leave office and house, and seek his bread in a foreign land.

In my description of the campaign of 1849 I have fitly remembered the brave master-joiner Callsen, who raised the shore telegraph, and made such zealous improvements by the simple means of his own handiwork, that his watchtower furnished us with ample news of all that took place on the sea. After the arrival of the Danes he fled from Schleswig and with his family came to great want, which could only be lessened by charity.

But still more touching, perhaps, was the fate of the chief artilleryman Clairmond, of Rendsburg, who was the only artilleryman who had seen service in the north battery of Eckernförde, where all besides were recruits. Captain Jungmann then and afterwards assured me that it was owing to him alone that the battery again opened fire in the afternoon, after it had been silenced. In May 1857 I received a letter from a third person, in which I was told that, after having served thirty-three years in the army of Holstein, the man was deserted, and, with four children, and not sufficient bread to satisfy his hunger. He was one of those who laid the great flag of the man-of-war at the feet of the German Fatherland, which was at that time taken, and took the beautiful frigate which has now passed into the possession of Prussia.

But she was not to succeed in having the name of Eckernförde, which she had borne for two years in honour of the victory, added to the Prussian navy; for according to the decisions of those then in power, the deeds and men of that time were preferably to be swallowed up in the sea of forgetfulness.

## CHAPTER VI

BREAK UP OF FRANKFORT NATIONAL ASSEMBLY.—REVOLUTIONARY INVITATIONS TO THE DUKE.—LETTER TO PRINCE ALBERT.—FREDERICK WILLIAM'S REFUSAL OF THE IMPERIAL CROWN.—THE PRUSSIAN CIRCULAR NOTE OF APRIL 7.—THE DUKE DECIDES TO STAND OR FALL BY THE CONSTITUTION.—DISCONSOLATE LETTER FROM VON STEIN.—THE CONSTITUTION ACCEPTED BY TWENTY-EIGHT MINOR STATES.—ATTEMPTS OF THE REVOLUTIONARY PROPAGANDA.—FLIGHT OF THE SAXON ROYAL FAMILY TO KÖNIGSTEIN.—THE WHITE FLAG.—ACCUSATIONS AGAINST VON BEUST.—HIS DENIAL.—THE SUPPRESSION OF THE SAXON INSURRECTION.—REVOLUTIONARY ATTEMPTS IN GOTHA.—INDECISION OF THE PRUSSIAN COURT.—DESIGNS OF THE EMPEROR NICHOLAS.—ALLIANCE OF THE THREE KINGS.—ACTION OF THE DUKE OF BRUNSWICK.—INVITATION TO TAKE PART IN THE THREE KING'S ALLIANCE.—LETTER TO PRINCE ALBERT.—THE COBURGERS REFUSE THEIR CONSENT; GOTHA MORE REASONABLE.—NEARLY ALL NORTH GERMANY JOINS THE NEW CONFEDERATE STATE.—DEBATE AS TO THE SEAT OF IMPERIAL DIET.—LETTERS FROM PRINCE ALBERT.

In the preceding chapters my manifold personal relations to the cause of Schleswig-Holstein obliged me, on account of the connection, to go far beyond the time when the German question had reached the highest point of its development. I will now return to general events, the course of which had thrown the political world into the anxiety and excitement of a fresh, bloody revolution.

The breaking up of the Frankfort National Assembly and the retirement of the Administrator of the Empire furnished an indelible picture at once of tragic and comic effect. I was still in camp at Gettorf when, sometimes from my own home, sometimes also from more distant portions of the German

people, and from the ship-wrecked fractions of St Paul's, the most singular expectations and demands arrived for me to place myself at the head of a party which desired to establish the Imperial Constitution sword in hand.

I wrote to my brother at that time, after sending my secretary, Berlet, to Frankfort immediately before that, in order to investigate the position of things:—

'I only received your letter the day before yesterday and thank you heartily for it. It is a blessed feeling at a time when all views oppose each other, to find someone who feels the same as we do when politically contemplating our confusion. Could one only act as one would like, one would always be on the right spot in the hour of danger. It can have remained no secret to you how greatly it is desired to place me at the head of the movement. I have received urgent entreaties from Frankfort and from many people in South Germany who are totally unknown to me. Even a larger portion of the National Assembly, now about to be entirely dissolved, came near making me official proposals. The bitter cup has fortunately passed from me.

'The time is already behind us, in which my honourable name and my mediation might perhaps have warded off the frightful blow.

'Thus our splendid forces are bleeding to death; freedom is in the hands of rascals, and, unless they wish to come out very badly, the Princes must begin the restoration of relations and conditions which, for the very reason that they were rotten and unsuitable to the times, gave rise to fresh revolution.

'A frightful prospect!'

The refusal of the Imperial crown on the part of the King of Prussia was both then and later regarded as the fundamental cause of this fatal time. Yet the mistake of Frederick William IV lay not so much in the refusal of the Frankfort Empire as in the wavering policy with which he often crossed the best preparations and steps of his own Minister, Count Brandenburg, in the German question.

Without the firm basis of legitimacy, without the consent

of the German Princes, without any consideration of foreign rights, only as a present of the belief in the sovereignty of the National Assembly, no Prince could place himself at the head of Germany with the title of a hereditary Emperor into the bargain.

Nevertheless, what the King had omitted was to take decided care of German, and at the same time Prussian interests at the moment when Austria's position, the continual revolt in Hungary, the war in Italy, had actually, and for the first time since many years, placed the power of Germany in his hand.

But the Prussian Ministry, and especially Count Brandenburg were by no means devoid of a full comprehension of what might be called Prussia's mission. Whilst the King defended the German Empire from the pretended ancient wrong of Austria in a really unfounded manner before the whole world, and clung with great tenacity to Prussia's position in Germany according to an empty formula, the Foreign Office in Berlin were striving to place a milder interpretation on the refusal of the crown in official despatches: 'and therefore,' it was said, 'it was an unconditional one, so that there could be no possibility of preventing an understanding between the Governments, through which alone the choice made could obtain any legal validity.'

Still more pacific and hopeful was the stand taken by the Prussian policy in the Circular Note of April 7th, the text of which should be kept in mind if one would properly judge the position of a German Confederate Prince at this time. I must therefore recall to the reader's mind the often printed despatch:

'The greater the conscientiousness shown in this respect, the more does His Majesty's Government feel itself bound, as far as in it lies, to push Germany's destiny into the way of that development, and to help on the longed-for accomplishment of the same. It therefore considers itself as much bound as it is justified in addressing a plain word to the other German Governments regarding this matter.

'In consideration of the fact that the Archduke Adminis-

trator of the Empire has arrived at the determination to resign his position, and in consideration of the great dangers which may arise in Germany from the carrying out of this decision, His Majesty the King is prepared to undertake the provisory management of German affairs, at the request of the German Governments and with the consent of the German National Assembly.

'In consequence of this summons and mindful of the demands made upon him by Prussia's position in Germany, His Majesty is decided on placing himself at the head of a German Confederate State, which will be formed by those States which join the Confederacy of their own free will.

'The form of this Confederate State will essentially depend upon how many and what States join it. Taking into consideration the political condition of all Germany, and the present state of the German National Assembly, one must not arrive at a too comprehensive conclusion.

'From this point of view, the undersigned is commissioned to make of the Honourable Ministers of State the request, as respectful as it is urgent, that the Ducal Crown Government send, with the greatest possible despatch, a particular plenipotentiary to Frankfort on the Main, who will be in a position to make binding declarations:

'1. Concerning the entrance into the Confederate State under the necessary conditions.

'2. Concerning the position which Governments thus uniting in a Confederate State have next to take with regard to the German National Assembly in their already concluded decisions, with the measure, that the work of union concerning the constitution shall be taken in hand without delay.

'3. Concerning the relation to those States which hesitate to join with this Confederate State, whereby it is desirable and, according to our view, to be striven for, that the still existing Confederate relations of the new State's reform be accommodated to suit them. The high Government of the undersigned will have furnished a plenipotentiary at Frankfort within eight days at furthest, with the necessary instructions and authorisation, and thinks that it may venture to

hope that the remaining Governments will act with equal zeal in this important matter, and will immediately send their declarations concerning the provisory management, as well as the other proposals, to Berlin, so that the Royal Government here will, in at the furthest fourteen days, be in a position to furnish a positive declaration concerning the German cause.'

From the points laid down by Count Brandenburg one thing at least appeared to be certain, that the Prussian Government, in union with other German Governments, was inclined to continue the German work of union, even against the will of Austria and Bavaria.

The difficulty lay in the Frankfort Imperial constitution, in the strict maintenance of which no one meanwhile believed. It would at first be unavoidable for the smaller States to accept it, unless they wished to fall victims to the revolution which was raising its head everywhere. Meantime, in this respect, the question could become decisive, with regard to the position Prussia had decided on assuming in the still existing Central Power; but at this very first question the King refused to act with his Ministry. This made it possible to the Administrator of the Empire and his so-called Ministry in Frankfort to continue the game which had formerly been shown to be successful. Instead of snatching the reins of power from the hands of the placeholder of the Austrian diet, a revolting dispute arose during the ensuing weeks concerning the Confederate Palace and its importance.

Under these circumstances, the complaints which the Administrator of the Empire uttered during the following weeks against Duckwitz were to a certain extent justified.*

For, in fact, no one could guess what the King was really steering for, if he did not undertake the provisory management of German affairs, nevertheless expressly promised in the circular note. Under these circumstances no less than thirty Government plenipotentiaries united in Frankfort,

* According to Duckwitz's information, Memoirs, p. 282, the Administrator of the Empire was, on the 7th of April, apparently without decided instructions from his Government, otherwise he could not make the declaration that he would go away in a fortnight, etc. On the 12th of May (p. 319) the Austrian plan of war against the Confederate States' intentions was already completed, and the part laid down which the Archduke was to play.

amongst whom, it is true, those from the larger States were wanting, in a declaration to the Prussian envoy, von Camphausen, and expressed in a collective note their readiness to enter into Confederate State relations with Prussia.

This collective note may be regarded as the real issuing point of the efforts to establish union, on which Prussia and Germany might place their hopes during a year and a half.

If the acceptance of the Imperial Constitution was made another condition by the Confederate Government, this was done at once under the supposition that modifications would be made, such as were afterwards agreed to by Prussia. Besides, the idea of establishing a Confederate State out of the Frankfort Imperial Constitution was brought forward with all desirable plainness, and I have always considered the collective note in the light of the real embryo of the union, which was to be brought to life by means of the alliance of the three kings.

The important document, well-known as it may be, should therefore not be absent in a description of these events:

'The high Governments, represented by the undersigned, have, with lively satisfaction, perceived from the note and its supplement, that His Majesty, the King of Prussia, is inclined to take his place at the head of the German Confederate State. If His Royal Majesty has made the lawfulness of the choice made by the National Assembly independent of the free assent of the Governments interested, the view which has been the incentive in this case deserves not only the highest recognition, but one must also recognise in it, considering the experiences of the past times, the effort to restore those guarantees which should be furnished for the German work of the Constitution.

'Filled with the conviction that the welfare of the universal Fatherland can only increase through the establishment of a healthy Confederate State, and that sacrifices must be made by individual Princes towards this end the undersigned do not hesitate hereby to declare in the name of the high Governments which they represent, their full assent to the choice made by the National Assembly.

'Touching the Constitution of the German Empire, this does not in all points correspond it is true, in the form in which it was passed by the National Assembly after a second reading, with the views which are entertained and were formerly brought forward by the high Governments of the undersigned; entirely apart from the fact that some of these Governments have beforehand acknowledged the decisions of the National Assembly to be binding, and that the stand-point of union insisted upon by others, as well as the Royal Prussian Government, might easily render it impossible to arrive at a happy result if carried out with determination, they do not consider their hesitation to be in the right proportion to the great dangers which a longer delay in the work of the Constitution must necessarily bring to the universal Fatherland.

'Whilst the undersigned therefore recognise and accept in the name of their Governments the Constitution of the German Empire decided on by the National Assembly, they express the expectations that the Royal Prussian Government, in consideration of the motives equally urgent for all parts of Germany, will follow the same principle and gain the conviction that they will in this way be in a position to fulfil the high calling assigned to them in the reformation of Germany. In this they start out with the conviction that all German Governments, to which the entrance into the Confederate State is not impossible on account of their peculiar relations, moved by the same patriotic comprehension, will, under this supposition, take part in a full, comprehensive union, and that a regulation with these beyond that of the Constitutions will not be needed.'

Although, for my part I could not mistake the fact that it was of very little importance if from twenty-eight to thirty small States held fast to the Imperial Constitution in opposition to the united kingdoms, I nevertheless declared most decidedly to Minister von Stein that I, for my part, would strive and pull for the acceptance of the Constitution, for want of something better. My popularity had greatly increased thereby in the Thuringian States, and there is no

doubt that it was owing to these circumstances that the revolution halted in Saxony and Altenburg, and particularly kept our Coburgers quiet during the unfortunate month of May, uneasy as they were in the South, and inclined as they were to radical tendencies.

Meantime the news which reached my Government from Frankfort as well as from Berlin concerning Prussia's intentions was very variable for many days, and my old Minister von Stein abandoned himself to the most pleasant illusions, as if Prussia would really yield and surpass herself in a great trait of character.

He had battled with General von Radowitz and thought he convinced the latter that the Constitution could only be improved by means of its acceptance. 'Upon this,' he wrote me, 'Radowitz went to Berlin to talk the King over.'

I was also informed from Frankfort that Camphausen had given the assurance that the Collective Note had become important in Berlin, and the King's decided answer was momentarily expected.

'How this will turn out,' ran the document further, 'appeared to be as yet unknown even to the Prussian Plenipotentiary. As he expressed his regret that a mediating solution was no longer possible, he also said expressly that his influence over the King's decision was almost none at all, he therefore expects, as it appears, an extreme declaration for one side or the other. If I understood him rightly, his conjecture inclines more to what is desired by our side. Then the wish was expressed that Prussia should only found the Confederate State at the first with those Governments which agreed to acknowledge the Constitution, it not only met with much approval from the Plenipotentiaries of the Collective Note, but Herr von Camphausen also appeared anything but unwilling to accept it.' Meantime the next few days shed only too much light on the situation, and Herr von Stein wrote to me on May 1st the following disconsolate letter, which reached me in my Schleswig head-quarters:—

'I wrote to Your Highness a few days ago. I expected consoling news from Berlin, but other news came, different

from what I looked for. The breaking up of Parliament and the decided non-acceptance of the Constitution, as well as the refusal of the choice of an Emperor surprised me greatly. Whoever may foresee how this will influence Prussia, I dare to prophesy no more. Your Highness will learn from the enclosed cutting from the *Dresden Journal* the motives given for the dissolution of Parliament, no doubt already known to you, and you may see from Elsholtz's report, also enclosed, how things stand in Munich.

'After Prussia deserts the German cause, she will naturally win in Dresden and Munich, and in Stuttgart the people have already made the King a German King, against his will. If the Court party would only convince themselves that the efforts to form a union are universal in Germany!

'There is now a curious combination. Twenty-eight less powerful states have acknowledged the constitution, a few larger ones will certainly be forced to do so during the coming time, and thus it may happen that three masses will be formed:

'1. Austria. 2. Prussia. 3. Smaller Germany.

'If these three Great Powers come together, the Confederacy could in future consist of three, instead of thirty-eight. In Frankfort all possible trouble will be taken to start the revolution, and even if it is quiet in Berlin, it will not remain so everywhere there, where there is no Wrangel & Co.'

The break with Frankfort and all her works was, however, a concluded fact in Berlin, and the measures of the Prussian Government were therefore soon carried out, even to the recall of the deputies and the Plenipotentiary to the Central Power, as I have already mentioned.

In order, however, to avoid breaking the thread of the understanding with the Princes and the individual Governments, the circular inquiry was made on May 2, whether the Governments on the other side were not inclined to send a plenipotentiary to Berlin for further consultation concerning the path now to be followed and the further development of the Constitution, with the German Governments, which were prepared for such a consultation?

'The royal Government on this side,' it ran further, 'is ready and willing, thoroughly to expose its views of this matter, and to meet its allies with proposals.'

My Government answered Prussia's invitation with the assurance that we had already held with Prussia, submitted ourselves to her lead in Frankfort, and taken a lively part in her desire to found a Confederate State. But our note then went on:

'The States Government here clings to this feeling of devotion for Prussia, and it will in future decide the actions of the same. We have willingly taken part under Prussia's direction in the work of agreement in Frankfort concerning the German Constitution, and sincerely regretted that it has not led to Prussia's acceptance of the German Imperial Constitution. The States Government here has always acknowledged the laws decided by the National Assembly and promulgated by the Central Power as binding, and at once established them in this country. This was also done with the 16th portion of the Imperial code of laws, which contains the Imperial Constitution.

'We, on our side, by no means agree on all points with this, for an agreement of all interests concerning all the decisions is considered impossible by the States Government here, and it confidently hopes that the wants will be supplied in the work of the Constitution by constitutional means through the negotiations with the two houses of the Imperial diet, and earnestly desires that the Royal Prussian Government may seek by the same means to bring about the alterations which she considers unnecessary.'

Representations of this kind were unfortunately useless in Berlin, but they had to be made, unless one wished to fall a victim to the revolution, with Saxony, Bavaria and Baden.

Nevertheless, the revolutionary propaganda had begun to cast very decided glances at the Thuringian States, and they hoped in May to continue the uprising in Dresden as far as Karlsruhe. The preparations made to this end were more earnest, and greater in extent than is usually believed or acknowledged. It was therefore natural that my Ministry

overwhelmed me with prayers to return quickly, and, even in their united communications, tried to induce me to cut short my Schleswig expedition. But my military honour had involved me too deeply in the Schleswig-Holstein cause for me to have been able to return home before the conclusion of the armistice, and I did not share the fears of the Ministry that an insurrection would occur in my own small States. I knew that I was as far as regarded my person, quite safe with the greater part of the people.

Thus it happened that I had only an opportunity of observing the unhappy occurrences in Saxony, to which I was so closely allied, and in my loved and well known Dresden, at a distance and was forced to remain a dumb looker-on when the news reached me of the flight of my father-in-law's House from Karlsruhe.

Meantime I had many excitements, caused by the news from home. On the 8th of May Prince Löwenstein fleeing with his mother from Dresden, arrived in Coburg, and the Princess was almost entirely without even the merest necessaries, so that my household was obliged to help in everything. The description of the state of things in Saxony furnished by the terrified family agreed only too well with other information, which General von Rhaden sent me. The latter was staying in Saxony, and was met everywhere, in Leipzig, in Vogtland, and in Altenburg by the red flags of the volunteers streaming towards Dresden.

When Herr von Friesen, in his latest book concerning these events,* relates that Minister for War von Rabenhorst was very much surprised by the universality of the uprising in the country, I was better informed concerning these things in Schleswig, than the royal Saxon authorities.

It was only too significant, that a single year had sufficed to bring about a complete internal dissolution in the otherwise so excellently administered kingdom, and the poor King, with his family, was to seek shelter beneath the cannons of Königstein.

All military preparations were wanting, and although the

* Recollections I. 149.

volunteer mob throughout the country broke like the cowards they were, every time they met even the smallest number of troops, the insurrection in Dresden reached, through the hesitation to adopt energetic and stern measures, such an extent, that it could not have been suppressed had it not been for Prussia's help.

How sad the condition of the King and his family was at Königstein has been portrayed to me in the most realistic manner by eye-witnesses. The towns of Pirna, Königstein and Schandau had declared themselves to be on the side of the insurgents, so that, soon after the arrival of the Royal Family, the fortress was almost entirely cut off from Dresden, and was to a certain extent in a state of siege. It had been considered necessary to remove the powder magazines outside the fortress into the inner rooms, which made the position of the unfortunate inhabitants still more uncomfortable.

Since the days of the French war the drawbridges at the gates had not been raised; this now reminded the King of the saddest times of the Saxon family history. In the fortress itself there was so little room that the cells of the prisoners had to serve as apartments for the officials and courtiers.

What a blessed moment it was, when on the 9th of May, the white flag was seen through a good telescope, floating on the Cross Tower in Dresden, may be imagined. All gave way to the most touching signs of joy.

The members of the family hastened with emotion to the window, where the peace-betokening flag could be seen. Every cannon-shot which had been fired in Dresden had been heard at Königstein, so that the entire Royal Family had been kept in a continual state of excitement.

When, afterwards, the scenes which had taken place at the occupation of Dresden and the proofs of the frightful bitterness of the troops became known in all their details, the noble King is said to have given way to great weakness, and perhaps these circumstances contributed most to lead the terrified Saxon Court into the path for which Prince Schwarzenburg was making proselytes in ever widening circles.

In Dresden the storm of the May days had made Minister

von Beust, who had managed Foreign Affairs since February 24th 1849, master of the situation.

It was a difficult task to ferry the Saxon State over the dark waters of the Revolution, and at the same time to maintain the independence of the kingdom against the Prussian deliverer.

In his recollections of those days Friesen made the communication that Herr von Beust had in a moment of weakness, expressed a fear that Prussian help would cost Saxony too much, and it would perhaps be better to come to an agreement with the insurgents concerning the acceptance of the German Imperial Constitution. In the refutation Herr von Beust entirely denied anything of the kind, and appealed to the fact that any transaction with the insurgents was entirely impossible. I think it only right, according to the impression made on me by this historical quarrel between the two leading men of the Saxon Government, to take sides with Herr von Beust, who was personally known to me long enough to convince me that he had no thought whatever of any equivocation at the time of the military alliance with Prussia.

Herr von Beust shared the fate of many statesmen in Germany, that all their actions have been, as it were, judged from one single point of view. Because, in the course of a considerable space of time, a feeling of antagonism arose between the Saxon and the Prussian policies, it was thought necessary in the beginning of the alliance to consider and interpret every step, even every personal utterance of the Saxon Minister's as an outbreak of his hostility against Prussia.

This is therefore the place to make some remarks with regard to Prussia.

There was a common conviction throughout both Court and Ministry that the Prussian Alliance was needed first of all in order to suppress the revolution. But from the very first War Minister von Rabenhorst was really opposed to the political consequences of the military alliance with Prussia.

It should not be asserted that the opposition of the years 1813-15 would still have influenced the Saxon army, there

was rather a chivalric and good German spirit prevalent in the officers' corps, yet the thought of a possible subordination of the Saxon troops to Prussian leadership was unwelcome to a great portion of the army.

General von Rabenhorst was not exempt from these petty jealousies, and supported them as far as he could. He belonged to that class of politicians who cannot understand that some alteration was necessary in the former confederate war constitution with their ten army corps, with their natural organisation, and regarded all assertions of the kind as democratic gossip. At the beginning of the year 1848 he was still Major and appointed to the War Office. His own quick advancement had, as it appears, made him raise his head somewhat higher than was consistent with the military importance of a middle State. The placing of the Saxon troops under the command of von Prittwitz in Schleswig was also not exactly calculated to decrease the dislike of many officers for Prussia, and even my best friends and closest comrades of the Schleswig-Holstein campaign were not entirely free in this respect. All this developed a distrust of Prussia of which one might think that it increased as soon as she would not help in the simple restoration of the old confederate relations.

Now one would greatly wrong Herr von Beust in thinking that, in May of the year 1849 he had taken the same, or even a similar political point of view. He belonged, as was wont to be said at that time in antithesis to the old Metternich systematics, to the new school of diplomatists.

It was really a clearly drawn characteristic of his, that he kept aloof from all doctrinary obstinacy in politics. His consideration of opportunities may at all times be over rather than under-estimated. That he thought with Prussia at that time, and even somewhat later, I may positively assert.

And Herr von Radowitz, whose confidence in me was often very great, often used to say even more regarding the Saxon Minister, which I repeat with all reserve, not wishing to suppress the opinion of so well informed a man.

He was of the opinion that Herr von Beust might easily have been kept allied to the Prussian cause, that, nevertheless,

with Prussian stiffness, any kind of attention had been neglected which so gifted and deserving a man might well exact. Even minor wishes, such as Beust, in his position of Saxon Minister, may have entertained, were accorded no notice whatever.

Herr von Radowitz complained bitterly that they were not more generous in Berlin in the matter of conferring decorations, and even if it is a self understood fact that such things do not usually alter the position of things in politics as a whole, yet it cannot be denied that there certainly had not, from the first, always been any dislike felt in Germany for Prussia, where such a feeling was first artificially raised by want of attention.

As things stood in Saxony in May, one would have to consider Herr von Beust indeed capable of extraordinary conduct, if, according to the representations of Friesen, we were at once to accuse him of deceiving the members of the Confederacy. One cannot say that he was wrong in referring to a Prussian officer, Count Waldersee,* who, as commander of the Alexander Grenadier regiment has showered the highest praise on the conduct of the Minister of King Frederick Augustus in his description of the struggle in Dresden. Indeed, the trial of the alliance which Herr von Beust had now concluded, could exist more easily during such bad times than in the favourable and insolent ones which followed.

That the Saxon insurrection was so quickly and thoroughly put down, appeared to be of all the greater merit on the part of the Government, as the revolutions of May really stood in the closest connection with each other, and foreign influences were active in them in much greater measure than is generally known. Some time later I received detailed information concerning the London and Paris revolutionary clubs, to which I shall return presently; for the moment I will only remind my readers how the movements in Cologne, Elberfeld, Crefeld, Neusz and Dusseldorf occurred at exactly the same time as the Dresden insurrection, and how they only hesitated

* Recollections of F. Count von Beust, p. 29

to break loose in Bavaria because they hoped to be able to make the troops rebel, as they had done in Baden.

But even in Gotha we did not escape entirely free from utterances of mad provocation, and on the 9th of May appeared one of those bombastic summonses, by means of which the German republicanism of those years has stigmatized itself everywhere as laughable.

'The moment of action has come!'—thus it ran—'the anarchy of some kings (!) has come forth against the constitution, our highest possessions are threatened by the old arbitrary dominion, the pools of blood in Saxony show us how great the danger is. Unless we look to it before the colossus of tyranny falls upon the blessed land of Thuringia,' etc. etc.

When one found on these placards of revolutionary nonsense, even in, on the whole, peaceful Gotha, next to the names of tailors, shoemakers, and locksmiths, that of a man belonging to the educated and learned class, as on the Rhine and in Baden poets and authors of the best kind had placed themselves under the dominion of empty phrases and the mob, one could hardly refrain from thinking that the greater part of these people did not know for whose benefit the revolution was being raised.

But Princes and Governments also fought against it, without knowing the real adversary who stood behind the barricades. Thus the Government of Baden was only too much surprised by the insurrection of the troops.

Whilst the Grand Duke had in all loyalty held out in Frankfort with the Twenty-Eight, and accepted the Imperial Constitution, the heavy blow of revolution in his land struck him unawares, and found him defenceless, yet what happened here had been prepared with the greatest care during the preceding months.

I received the news of my father-in-law's flight on the 16th of May by way of Berlin, first through our present Empress Augusta, who corresponded diligently with me.

The Prussian Court had been informed by telegram of the insurrection of the soldiers, and was much confounded by the event. But an extraordinary amount of indecision was

shown as to what should and must be done. A corps of troops was collected, it is true, but they could not decide whether to have it advance without furthur delay into the Palatine and Baden. The fatal differences between the Administrator of the Empire and the Prussian Government concerning the acceptance of the Central Power, which had reached a climax during those days, prevented the King from making any firm decision whatever. The Prussian officers, who, with the brigade of General von Schack, whose friendship I have enjoyed for many years, marched through Gotha to Hesse, but on the 24th of May they were still in complete ignorance of their destination. Time had in every way been given the insurrection in Baden to spread and take a firm hold. Had not the unfitness of the Provisionary Revolutionary Government in the Palatine and in Baden been so great, that even Raveaux turned with disgust from the babblers, the loss of time might have borne bitter fruit. Only when the Prince of Prussia was sent to the Rhine, to take command of the corps, were more serious measures taken to put down the insurrection.

Meantime, the Prince of Prussia had also been instructed to carry on his operations in common and full accord with the Archduke Administrator of the Empire. A corps of Imperial troops was placed side by side with the Prussian ones; the consequence of this was many a jealousy and mutual hindrance, and General von Peucker is deserving of praise for having obviated many an unpleasantness by means of his skilful mediation.

But from a political point of view also, one could not but wonder all the more at the consideration shown the so-called Central Power in the Baden-Palatine insurrection, as the latter had at that very time adopted an exactly opposite attitude towards the Prussian Government with regard to Schleswig-Holstein, and on the 26th of May had simply decreed the placing of the so-called Imperial contingent under the chief command of von Prittwitz.

At about the middle of May Colonel Fischer was sent from Berlin to the Administrator of the Empire, to decide him to

resign his mandate. In case of the contrary, they declared that they must reserve for themselves all rights concerning peace and war in the affairs of the Empire. A few days later the King's wavering had already brought the Ministry to decide not to take any steps in Germany without the consent of Austria and Russia.

General Rauch was sent to Warsaw and General Kanitz Vienna, to obtain direct permission to interfere in Baden. Both great powers were at that time fully occupied with the pacification of Hungary, but this did not prevent the Emperor Nicholas from proclaiming himself the real master of the situation in Germany also.

In Prussia's capital people related the characteristic reply of the Czar to the King: 'He was pleased if the revolution was really about to be abated, as for that, his fleet and his army were ready to march in at any time, everywhere where rebellious subjects had risen against the rights of their Princes.'

All these diplomatic considerations, round about enquiries, and shynesses only had the effect of depreciating the name and authority of Prussia in a most deplorable manner, and nothing was left but the brave army, which was in a condition to face respect and fear from any and every enemy.

On the 13th of June, under General von Hirschfeld, the Prussian troops moved into the Palatine between Kreuznach and Saarbrücken. Meanwhile the Imperial army proceeded by the mountain road as deliberately as if it desired to prove that it was worthy to inherit its name. In both corps there were little defeats which the revolutionary Governments knew how to exaggerate into great victories of freedom. This made it possible to the Polish leader of the Baden revolution to postpone the undoubted decision and submission by means of incessantly renewed attempts and attacks. Only after the fights of the 29th and 30th of June did the heads of the revolution give up their cause as lost.*

* Häusser's book will make it possible for me to treat the revolution of Baden in as few words as possible. In this work the personal relations of the Grand-Ducal family particularly as regards the flight from Karlsruhe, as I can verify, are also described from the best possible information.

A few of them nevertheless found time to plunder the castles and possessions of the Grand Duke and Prince von Furstenberg, in their flight. The transport of insurgents to Swiss soil could not be prevented, and gave rise to the difficulties of delivery which never failed to arise on such occasions.

But there was also an after-piece to the diplomatic war between Prussia and the still existing Central Power. In order to anger the Prince of Prussia, the Administrator of the Empire demanded that the Austrians should move from Braganza into the neighbourhood of the sea. This desire on the part of the Imperial Power was greatly supported from Munich, and they referred to the pressing necessity of including all the neighbouring Confederate Courts, and subsequently Austria also, in the pacification of Baden, although the latter had no excess of available troops. But they wished to preserve the principle, and the Prince of Prussia allowed himself to be persuaded to make a severe declaration against the powerless Imperial Ministry, which latter, on the other hand, insisted on its supposed rights, even that of allowing Austrian troops to move into Baden.

The revolutions of May had, if one can in any way attribute any good to such events, at least the effect that the necessity of a closer union of the States in Germany could not be buried in forgetfulness. After the Frankfort work of the Constitution had been set aside in Berlin as democratic disorder, and the Emperor of Germany, as my brother had expressed it, had bravely been thrown into the water by the King of Prussia, the positive elements for the founding of the unavoidably new one were only too weak.

The drawing nearer of the royal Courts to one another was a makeshift against the dangers of the revolution, rather than an outflow of patriotic wishes for the reformation of the kingdom. The powerful party which surrounded the King in Berlin had written nothing else than simple negation on their flag. But with the battle-cry 'only nothing new' there could naturally be no practical Government, and so Count von Brandenburg fought from day to day, in order to keep the German question still distinct to the hearing of his royal

master against the assaults of the Court and *Kreuzzeitung* party.

It is one of the most usual and self-understood traditions of the history of those days, that the so-called union, as the given inheritance of Prussian politics, was also the penetrating point of view of universal action in Berlin. But unless one wished to consider Count von Brandenburg as a Hohenzollern at the same time as the bearer of these ideas, one would rather have to say that everything which happened in this respect would have to be carried out in direct opposition to the predominant wishes and feelings of the moment.

Vexed, and against his will, the King set about performing a task which might bring him into difficulties or even conflict with his Russian and Austrian friends, and if Count von Brandenburg, without a programme, succeeded in urging the King to take one or another step further, this was only possible through the continually disappointed hopes that the kinsmen in Austria and Russian brother-in-law would finally have to make some concessions.

When, finally, the discovery was made in Berlin, that a closer political union of the German States would, like the foundation of the tolls-union, be justified by the wormhole paragraphs of the old Confederate Act, they thought they had found with this an excellent legitimisation for a Confederate State policy, and tried in this way to quiet the King's conscience.

Meanwhile the discussions carried on between Bavaria, Saxony, Hanover, and Prussia concerning the positions of the kingdoms with regard to the constitutional question, had by no means come to a proper end. The German public in Munich at length obtained some pretended explanation of their course. When the Bavarian Parliament was opened on May 17th, Herr von der Pfordten came forward with a declaration which came just as near the intention of accepting the Frankfort Imperial Constitution under the supposition of a few modifications, as they had withdrawn from it in Berlin and Dresden. In one of the memorials laid before the Houses

on the 18th of May, concerning the German Constitutional question, Herr von der Pfordten furnished the information that the Bavarian Government 'had therefore willingly yielded to the invitation of the Royal Prussian Government to bring about a union of views amongst the Governments by means of negotiations.

'These negotiations, which have already been begun,' it ran further, 'will be hurried on with all possible haste, and a prosperous result may be hoped for all the more, since the Royal and Imperial Austrian Government has also taken part in them.'

The truth was exactly the opposite to what Herr von der Pfordten wished to promise in respect to the Austrian participation. The negotiations with Bavaria might be considered as preliminarily broken up on the 18th of May, and Prussia was just about to follow the line adopted in company with Saxony and Hanover.

That this energetic step was taken in Berlin was entirely unexpected by most people, for it was little known then, and has been so since, that the merit of having pushed the three Kings forward at that moment, really belonged to the Duke of Brunswick.

His Government had, on the 16th of May, made a number of proposals to the twenty-eight States which recognised the Constitution in a note drawn up by Herr von Schleinitz, which created the greatest and most painful sensation in Berlin.

The kingdoms which did not recognise the Constitution were to be at once united into an independent group of States, the management of affairs given over to Würtemberg, and it at length be brought about that the Imperial Diet summoned by the National Assembly should be opened as soon as was practicable.

Count Brandenburg answered already on the 20th of May, although no official notice had been furnished him of the Brunswick note, on the supposition that the dangerous invitation might have reached the individual Governments, in so moving, earnest and comprehensive a manner, that one could well see how much they felt themselves hit in Berlin.

'The Royal Government,'—it ran—'would feel the deepest regret at seeing the friendly States adopt a course which could only help on their conviction of the internal dissolution . . . a course which must only too greatly paralyse Prussia's efforts to establish a complete union of all Germany, as well as for the protection and safety of the Governments of the German States.'

The despatch sent to my Government particularly said further:

'The Royal Government has had open and earnest representations of their intentions with regard to the untimely and serious step taken by him, made to the Ducal States Ministry of Brunswick through their envoy. It confidently expects that the very laudable Ducal Government will find sufficient motives in a quiet and deliberate consideration of things and in their long existant and very friendly relations to Prussia, to make them refrain from taking a step which would directly oppose the efforts of the Royal Government; it has, however, in consideration of these friendly relations, not wished to omit particularly to make this *confidential* communication concerning their views of these proposals, to the highly laudable Ducal Government.'

Count Brandenburg's exact and loyal explanation was, as I hardly need say, sufficient to make the Brunswick proposal fall through. But whether the responsibility of such advice was taken in Berlin which should nevertheless have presupposed Prussia's entire guarantee for the cause of the union, must remain undecided. One only had, as in all the steps taken by the Prussian Government, a painful feeling of alternating hopes and disappointments.

On the 28th of May we received information of the conclusion of the Three Kings' Alliance and an invitation to take part in the same. The bill which the three Kings brought forward for the Constitution of the German kingdom was still to be regarded as a complete arsenal of rights and freedoms, which were to be ensured to the German nation. The election-law contained very judicious limitations, even if it might give rise to great difficulties on account of the feeling

then predominating, as to obtaining the consent of the Assembly of the country to it. On the 30th of May the bill for a Provisory Confederate Arbitration had already been laid before the allied States, and the entrance into the Administrative Council set going in Berlin was withheld from all the participating Governments.

I must refuse to make known here the copious documents which belonged to the founding of the Three Kings' Alliance, and have been often enough printed word for word. I will only say for the sake of the connection of the narrative, that Count Brandenburg's circular note expressly said:

'That the legal conclusion depended upon the free assent of the national representation, and that the Governments would therefore appoint a Diet of the extent and according to the decisions for election, which the bill for the Constitution preliminarily points out.'

As, besides this, all the rights and duties in the stipulations of 1815 were withheld from the Governments which did not enter the closer alliance, one might for a moment seriously believe that the understanding with Austria, so greatly desired by Frederick William IV, had really been established.

Meantime this very reservation observed with the plenipotentiaries of the twenty-nine States in Frankfort in the election-law, which was considered liberal, had given rise to a certain hindrance in the quicker acceptance of the Prussian proposals, and whilst the Kings founded their alliance on Article 11 of the Confederate Act, the progressive representatives of the Governments were much more of the opinion that the whole Central Power must pass from the hands of the Administrator of the Empire to those of Prussia and her allies.

As regarded the small States, a certain difficulty lay in obtaining the assent of the Assembly of the country to the unconditional entrance into the Confederacy. Everywhere in these lands where the traditional weakness of the Ministers was the order of the day, one saw the most incredible things. The Thuringian Ministers, instead of acting as quickly as possible, assembled repeatedly under the doubtful influence of

Herr von Watzdorf, who probably could not yet forget the deplorable part which he had just played as Imperial Commissioner in the Dresden insurrection, and how scanty a reception he received from Herr von Beust.

In Coburg Bröhmer made me all sorts of representations concerning the necessity of obtaining the consent of the Houses with regard to all foreign alliances, and in Gotha Herr von Stein considered it equally necessary to lay the matter before the Assembly of the country.

My brother, who had welcomed the alliance of the Kings with real enthusiasm, wrote to me full of impatience and sympathy on the 5th of June:

'The proclamation of the German Constitution, which Prussia has worked out with Hanover and Saxony, is so important an act, that I feel myself urged to give you my views of the matter. I regard it as the only means of safety for Germany, and its acceptance on the part of the small Governments as their sacred duty. I well know that Prussia's hesitation has terribly aggravated the position of the poor small States, as burghers and nobility have already taken the oath of the Frankfort Constitution in most places, as in Coburg, but a way out of this false position must be found. The most suitable appears to me to be that, appealing to the decision of the National Assembly, which demanded that the Constitution should be accepted as a whole, and did not even allow the King of Prussia to add a condition to the acceptance of the Imperial crown. The Governments should now prove that the whole of the Constitution which was sworn has not existed at all, nor will exist. All conditions are wanting; namely the first decision concerning the extension and continuance of the kingdom, from which Prussia, Austria, Bavaria, Saxony, Hanover and five-sixths of its constituent parts are deducted, then the Head, as Prussia has declined the Imperial crown, etc., finally the National Assembly itself, which would be in a position to bring about the changes which have become necessary on account of the altered condition of things in the Constitution.

'The annexation to the Prussian Constitutional States

Union should be made as quickly as possible, because it can furnish the only possibility of limiting the progress of anarchy, and because a longer hesitation will place Germany in frightful danger.

'In France the fight with the red republic is growing more and more dangerous, the enemy is attacked by the socialistic poison. No General has longer confidence in the army for any length of time. An effort to save the country by means of a war is therefore imminent, and will daily seem more desirable to the French, whether the retrograde party be at the wheel or the red republic.

'Baden is the point to which a war policy can at once be attached. The republic there is in continual communication with that in France, if it is to be suppressed the cry for help will be sent to France and heard by her. If Germany is not yet constitutionally organised, if Prussia has not assumed the leadership of German affairs legally and according to contract, the poor Fatherland will have but poor prospects!

'I therefore conjure you to do all you can in order to bring about a conclusion as soon as possible. Now farewell, always your faithful brother,

'ALBERT.

'*Windsor Castle, June 5th*, 1849.'

I did not delay a moment to express my full agreement with these hastily penned lines of my brother's, but thought it right to describe the difficulties of the situation more plainly, and therefore my answer of the 9th of June may serve the reader as a portrayal of popular feeling and at the same time inform him better of the condition of affairs:—

'I received your welcome letter of the 5th inst. yesterday.

'I again see with pleasure that we hold the same views on the present state of German affairs. It is a real piece of good luck, as in our confused time two men are rarely found who cherish the same political convictions. A few hours before I had the pleasure of receiving your letter, a courier was hastening to Gotha, with instructions similar to those which

you propose to me. The matter is extremely difficult, reasonable and simple as it is.

'The mistrust and hatred towards Prussia are very strong, and are continually kept awake by assemblies of the people and secret agitations. I enclose a letter from von Meyern, from which you can perceive the results attained by our Plenipotentiaries in Frankfort.

'Some yielding may be obtained in Gotha through the proximity of Erfurt; in Coburg the ground is very bad. Bröhmer's weakness helps the anarchists in every imaginable way, and when everything is spoiled, and ready for overthrow, he will withdraw from the business.

'With all this he is artificially supporting an opposition with the Gotha Ministry, and leads the Coburg Representative Assembly, which is on the whole good, around by the nose. In spite of all the love and fidelity of which I am assured on all sides, things must come to an insurrection and a decision by force of arms. If a revolt breaks out in Coburg in favour of the Imperial Constitution, we shall have throughout Franconia a repetition of the Baden events. The storm-birds are already here; I mean by that, the democratic leaders who command everywhere, who led the affair in Berlin, Vienna and Dresden, and who invariably slipped away.

Bröhmer welcomed them at Coburg, in order to give them a shelter from the pursuit of the reactionary Governments, I see very clearly, and have written, exposing these dangers, to every well and courageously inclined man, such as Oberländer, Eberhardt, etc., of whose feelings I am kept closely informed. This is all in vain, if the remarkable conduct of Prussia is to be borne, the clubs allowed to exist and the notorious bawlers and instigators are neither sent away nor imprisoned. I hope I may be wrong!

'You might get something done through Stockmar and Briegleb; I have nothing new to write to you. Your faithful brother,

'ERNEST.

'*Gettorf, near Kiel, June 9th*, 1849.

I will not here go into further particulars of the negotiations with the Parliaments of Coburg and Gotha concerning the entrance into the Three Kings' Alliance. On the 6th of September, after I had repeatedly urged States Councillor Bröhmer to make a proposition, the Coburgers simply refused their consent. Before it had reached that point, Bröhmer had given vent to the most angry expressions respecting me, saying that I, as he once wrote, appeared to have entirely forgotten that I also possessed a Duchy of Coburg.

The matter had gone somewhat better in Gotha, at least no vote of refusal against the alliance of the three kings had been obtained, and the annexation could therefore be accomplished. I received from the clever pen which had often before drawn me such striking pictures of the circumstances in Frankfort, a most amusing report of the negotiations relative to the Gotha Assembly, of which I should not like to deprive the reader, as the gaiety which so often came to the front in those hard days must not be entirely forgotten in these recollections.

'*Gotha, July* 11, 1849.

'The Honourable Minister von Stein, who intends to start for Berlin early to-morrow, commissions me to furnish Your Highness with a short report of to-day's session of the Representative Assembly, and as he adds, with the same analogy as my Frankfort reports. In order to do this I shall have to take pains to write in miniature.

'The German question was the order of the day; eighteen deputies were present. The position of the parties appeared to be very simple. The report of the committee (Reporter Ritz) contained an extract of the conditions of the Gotha Conference Programme and the agreement to the entrance into the Prussian Alliance under presupposition of these conditions. Heuneberg took a somewhat Left view of the addition of a protest for the preservation of the sovereignty of the people. The extreme Left was formed by Schwerdt, who intended to bring about a delay in the whole affair by interlarding various preliminary questions.

'On the Right of the Committee proposals, on the other hand, Ausfeld (clearly of the opinion of Briegleb, whom he had recently met in Coburg) proposed simply to accept the Gotha programme in the lump, and thereby to negotiate a probable agreement with the remaining Thuringian and many other German Parliaments.

Schwerdt, whom I should like to call the Gotha residence opened the debate with a severe speech against the absolute Prussian policy, was unnecessarily called to order twice, and at the end admitted that they should finally have to join with Prussia. Heuneberg, the moderate Simson of Gotha arrived at the same result after him.

But Ritz, the extractor of the Gotha programme did not oppose this either, and Ausfeld was of exactly the same opinion, only considering the trouble of making extracts from the programme to be superfluous. A few innocent inhabitants at the extreme end of the table made known their hearty assent by the unmistakable signs of slumber, or by complete absence of thought, and their spokesman Küttner proved that of at least the latter in a really perilous speech.

'Such extremely pleasant harmony amongst all those present might have made one think that the most patriarchal but, for one used to a strict order of business, really absolute efforts of President Brückner to lead the Assembly to a favourable decision concerning the Ausfeld proposals, would be quite superfluous, and that a *unanimous* determination must be the necessary result: how great was the universal surprise, therefore, when, after a three hours' debate, carried on, too, in the most comfortable conversational tone, no resolution at all was arrived at! No one would deviate from his form of declaration, the proposal of the committee was defeated by ten to eight votes, that of Ausfeld with the same number, and the remainder of the amendments were defeated by an absolute majority.

'If the Assembly of deputies is the voice of the Gotha nation, one can assert according to it that personal obstinacy and ambition are some of their prominent peculiarities of character.

'As regards the States Government, it may, as Herr von Stein and the Assembly mutually assured each other, be quite satisfied with this want of a result, as all portions of the Assembly have expressed themselves only in different formulas in favour of the entrance into the Prussian alliance.

'Herr von Stein will therefore, as announced above, go to Berlin to-morrow, and will report from there to Your Highness.'

As may be seen from the contents of the above letter, the Assembly for the consideration of the entrance of Gotha into the Kings' Alliance had already taken place through the influence of the meeting of the two centres of the dissolved National Assembly, during the last days of June, in Gotha.

When I at first learned the intention of the leaders of this party, which, as is known, was simply called the Gotha party, I was not over pleased, but had to admit afterwards that the result of the consultations in Gotha was surprisingly favourable. They had, with the declaration that the aims which were to be gained by means of the Imperial Constitution of March 28th, were higher than the stiff observance of form, arrived at a point of view, which in every way coincided with the Prussian Bill for the Imperial Constitution, and finally condensed the decisions of the negotiations in Gotha in the two clauses:

1. To bring about the junction of the States which had not yet taken part in the bill brought forward in the Berlin Conference.

2. To share in the elections for the next Imperial Diet.

One might think that the hand offered in Berlin to a large number of greatly esteemed men would be gladly accepted.

Unfortunately, the predominance of blind reaction had become so decided there, that everything which might act as a reminder of the Frankfort Assembly was regarded with mistrust. As I was only too well informed of this feeling in the highest circles, I feared that the resurrection of the names Gagern, Bassermann, Beckerath, and so many others, would only puzzle the King in his own work.

States Minister Herr von Stein, who entertained no such cares, wrote, on the contrary, the most pleasing reports of the negotiations in Gotha, although it was a bad stroke on the part of the democrats that they appeared in Gotha simultaneously with the members of the Frankfort centre, and made decisions on their side also.

'Whilst the former Frankforters live with the higher middle classes,' Herr von Stein informed me on the 26th of June, 'the democrats lodge amongst the lower classes, whereas the former hold their sessions in the semi-circular hall of the theatre, the latter assemble at the "Stadt Coburg." It is to be hoped that they will not come any nearer to each other, for our military force here has dwindled down to 150 men, as 200 men marched to Wolkenrode a few days ago.'

Meantime everything went on to Herr von Stein's great satisfaction. He sent me circumstantial information of the negotiations and speeches, which were held at a dinner at Mohren, which lasted three hours, although consisting of three courses only. The Minister's final criticism was contained in the following words, written on the 29th:

'I most humbly inform Your Highness that the Conferences held here by the former Centre have gone off very well. The men were very diligent, and quite unanimous, so that yesterday, the third day, the accompanying declarations were ready. This declaration is better, more reconciling and yielding than I had expected, and will do very good service for the small States with the assembly of the country. Many of the former members leave to-day. The Gagerns, Count Giech, and some others, will take a trip into the forest with me, Briegleb goes with Simson, Beseler and Hergenhahn to Coburg. All are very well pleased, and there was no dissenting voice amongst the people.'

A fortnight later, Minister von Stein went by my order to Berlin, and, as the Parliament of both Duchies could not be brought to give a positive assent, to negotiate the entrance into alliance of the 26th of May on my personal responsibility and at my own risk.

'I wish to announce to Your Highness,' he wrote on the

13th of July, 'my arrival yesterday in Berlin. I do not think that the negotiations here will be of a very complicated nature, for the Plenipotentiaries, not without intention, are received singly, are thoughtfully listened to, all possible prospects for the future in the way of possibility of effort are promised, but participation, in the interim, in the present alliance, the election-law, and the arbitration is insisted upon.

'Secret negotiation with the Plenipotentiaries was until now not favoured, and as it appears, not sought by them.

'Weimar has already signed, Darmstadt and Oldenburg are as good as ready, Seebeck (for Meiningen and Altenburg) will not long delay, but I shall only introduce the business, keep an opening, but not conclude, until I have laid the propositions before Your Highness for your gracious decision.

'I have already sent in my name to the King, also to Count Brandenburg, shall speak with the latter to-day, as well as the gentlemen of the Administrative Council. . . . The hopes for the German Empire are still very faint. The Ultra-Prussian party is growing stronger and stronger, and is on the point of becoming somewhat disagreeable here, and I hear to my sorrow, that Herr von Zeschau is following a completely reactionary absolutist line. Such extremes are the best food for the revolutionary monster.'

There were great difficulties attendant on the negotiations in Berlin for all the representatives of the small States, on account of the election law, which the feeling which still prevailed at that time in the Representative Assembly really made very dangerous to the establishment of a Diet to be summoned by the Administrative Council of the Confederate States. Some courage was necessary when the smaller sovereigns were forced on account of the alliance to introduce without delay the most unpopular of all measures, and they were urged to this by the same Prussia which sixteen years later, by a stroke of the pen, announced universal suffrage as the only safe remedy for German unity.

Perhaps this circumstance may serve to a certain degree as an exoneration for some men, such as my Radical Coburgers and their chief Bröhmer, who at that time raised

every kind of opposition against the Prussian union in the Representative Assemblies and the Government of the country.

During the month of August, meantime, almost all Germany north of the Main had united in the new Confederate State, and only the South German kingdoms remained decidedly aloof.

I had, for my part, ratified the Confederate agreement on the 10th of August, and appointed States Councillor Seebeck, who represented the other Thuringian States in the Administrative Council, as my Plenipotentiary also. The exchange of the documents of ratification was delayed on account of the abovementioned parliamentary difficulties much longer than I liked, however, and at the last moment Bröhmer tried to prevent the decisive step from being taken.

It was the same with the Grand Duke of Oldenburg's Parliament in the matter of the annexation, but we were still sailing before an apparently fair wind, and no one dreamed where the principal enemies of the alliance were to be sought for.

Seebeck's reports of the negotiations of the Administrative Council sounded favourable enough, and all desirable steps had been taken to set the Confederate arbitrators in action.

The general state of things will best be seen from a letter of the 20th September, from the excellent representative of the Thuringian States, a man whose extraordinary political activity in the later years of the reaction has been only too universally forgotten:

'The most obedient undersigned has the honour of reporting to a high Ducal States Ministry according to instructions from the very honourable remission of the 15th inst., the document of ratification despatched to him, as well as the plenipotence most graciously accorded by the administrative council in their yesterday's session, and the ministerial letter addressed to them some days ago has been remitted to the Minister-President Count von Brandenburg.

'During the same session the documents of ratification of the Grand-Duke of Oldenburg and the Duchy of Anhalt-Dessau and Köthen were laid before the administrative

council, and the declaration of the principality of Schaumburg-Lippe, as well as the free town of Lübeck, that they desired at once to enter the alliance of the 26th of May without further delay, were brought to their knowledge.

'On the other hand, refusals were at first sent to the repeated inquiries of the royal States Ministry here, by the Government of the Landgrave of Hesse Homburg and the royal envoys from the Netherlands. Whether the annexation of the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg will immediately follow is as yet undecided, but their inclination to join was made known a good while ago.

'The free city of Frankfort has carried on preliminary negotiations concerning the entrance into the alliance through Syndic Harnier, now here. It seems that their speedy entrance may be hoped for.

'The States belonging to the Confederacy are at present Prussia, Saxony, Hanover, Baden, the Electorate of Hesse-Darmstadt, Saxe-Weimar, Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, Altenburg, Mecklenburg-Schwerin and Strelitz, Brunswick, Nassau, Oldenburg, Anhalt-Bernburg, Dessau and Köthen, Reusz elder line, Reusz younger line, Schaumburg-Lippe and Hamburg, Bremen, Lübeck. The latter in accordance with its latest declaration, although the accession is not yet formally established.

'The alliance of Saxe-Meiningen and the two principalities of Schwarzburg has been announced, but not yet ratified. Bavaria has decidedly declared that she will not enter into it. Würtemberg's annexation is still to be expected. How it will turn out may not be foreseen from the existing state of things.

'According to trustworthy news, a decisive crisis seems imminent there. The inclination to ally herself with the United Confederate State would probably be excited, if it were recognised that they were in earnest concerning the speedy summoning of the Confederate Parliament. That the needful be done without further delay, and a time fixed for the elections to the Diet, is indispensable in this, as well as in every other respect.

'This conviction is shared by all the members of the administrative council, *with the exception of the Plenipotenti-*

*aries of Saxony and Hanover*, and as the Government here now shows itself decided energetically to urge on the effectuating of the closer Confederate State in the proposed constitutional form, it is their intention to bring forward proposals towards that end in one of the next sessions. Whether this will be done by Prussia or by some other Power, is as yet undecided. In this respect it will be of particular importance whether and how the intention of the Ministry here is accomplished, of nominating another chairman to the Administrative Council instead of Herr von Kanitz. Count Bülow, who was at first thought of for this position, refuses to accept it. Herr von Radowitz will, it is said, only take it when the negotiations with the Diet begin. Herr von Usedom, who was also proposed, is said to be negotiating for the Danish peace.

'It is now said that Herr von Dönhof is to be appointed to the office. Whether this will be the case must be decided during the next few days. Herr von Kanitz still presided yesterday, but he opportunely let it be understood that he would not much longer take part in our negotiations.

'Regarding the appointment of a fixed time for the elections, it was first of all necessary that the allied Governments should plan the orders for carrying out the election law, and give them to the Administrative Council for examination. Such orders have already been placed before the Council, and have first been handed over to a commission formed for the purpose. Those which were still wanting were recalled to memory yesterday, and the undersigned therefore takes the liberty of making the most obedient request that the Ducal States Ministry will have the goodness to forward to him as soon as possible the election orders to be issued for the Duchy, that he may hand them over to the Administrative Council, with the addition of their motives, as far as they are to be communicated for the justification of the modifications which appear necessary for the founding of the election law.'

The ready activity of the Administrative Council was shown to the individual Governments not only with regard to

the elective legislature, but also in respect of the members of the Confederate Council. Several necessary alterations in the Constitution were undertaken; even so early as the 10th of September, a printed proposition for the order of business of the future Imperial Diet was ready. Everything seemed to help on the quick Constitution of the Confederate State.

Debates were already being held concerning the spot in which the future Imperial Diet was to assemble.

The request of the Senate of Frankfort, which wished to make the appointment of the old election city as the seat of the Imperial Diet the condition of its entrance into the Confederacy was with perfect right refused. Erfurt was spoken of, Aix-la-Chapelle, Gotha, Brunswick, as the future assembling place of the German Deputies of the Confederate State.

On the 29th of September General von Kanitz as President of the Administrative Council, resigned his office to Minister von Bodelschwingh, and introduced him to the Plenipotentiaries. The choice might in every respect be called a happy one. The decision and warmth with which the new chairman declared it his intention to suffice for the task allotted to him, the certainty with which he promised to help to carry out the project of the Confederate State, and the hopes which he set on it, were praised everywhere, and he undertook with great energy to carry out all sorts of reforms in the manner of working hitherto adopted by the Administrative Council.

Whoever, in Berlin, closely observed the circle immediately concerned, could perceive at the end of September many remarkable phenomena. Kanitz's retirement had taken place under circumstances and with explanations which at least did not appear very friendly to the alliance, and what was related of the negotiations of the Governments of Austria and Prussia concerning the question of the Central Power, excited no small surprise amongst the Plenipotentiaries.

In the question concerning the German fleet and what should immediately be done with regard to it, old Austria had at once disclosed her at that time still unconquered jealous policy and enmity against Prussia and the allied Princes, and afforded a bad prospect for the future of the union.

There were the darkest signs of secret intrigues in Munich, and the news from the Saxon Court made it difficult for anyone to mistake the fact that on the upper side of the Ministerial and official current of the Three Kings' Alliance wind from an entirely different quarter was beginning to blow.

There was no longer any secret in this for initiated circles, and my brother wrote, as may easily be explained with great indignation concerning these events:

'Nothing can improve in Germany until the German question is set in order, but it is still far from being solved. The Six Kings' plan, which is to unite all the small States beneath six crowns and then scoff at unity, is still the darling wish of the royal Courts, and of none more than that of Saxony.

'How can the poor Kings imagine that, after they have again been treacherous to the common Fatherland, they could be in a position to restore quiet, order and lawfulness in Germany, and that without confidence or unity amongst themselves!'

If my brother was able as early as the 10th of September to perceive such unpromising signs on the cards of Germany's middle States, one must not wonder if he wrote on the 8th of November:

'Your picture of the state of things at home is not exactly of a rosy hue, and yet, I fear, faithfully painted. Nevertheless this is the necessary condition into which a land falls after a Revolution, the solution of which has not yet been found. There seems now to be nothing for the small States to do, except to bear their fate courageously and patiently, and to hold to the alliance made with Prussia faithfully and determinedly, for it alone offers a solution of the German question which will satisfy the majority of rightly minded men.

'The conduct of the Kings is beyond all criticism, and can bear them no good fruit. The Governments really should not deceive Germany again, otherwise still greater misfortunes will descend upon them. They had acknowledged the Frankfort Constitution, and now, as Prussia had saved them,

they withdraw from an Alliance and a Constitution which contains all the modifications which they wished to see in them.

'That Austria could not take part in a German Constitution, and never would do so, is perfectly well known to them, and yet a Constitution has now been promised the German Nation for the hundredth time.

'Nothing can be done, except for Prussia to take the head, and the gain lies more on the side of the German States than on that of Prussia, who must sacrifice her European position, whilst the remaining States have never had one, and would never obtain one, even by mediatising or robbing their smaller neighbours.

'But the thing is for Germany to be represented in Europe and this in such a way that she shall occupy the rank which is due to her. The small States have only to join, as their independence, as far as it ever existed except on paper, will thereby be fully assured, and they will be relieved from the childish negotiations of their Parliaments by the handling of the German question in a great Parliament. Their Parliaments must, at any rate, play second fiddle when an organ is found for Germany.'

When, at length, towards the end of the year, as will at once be shown, the position of the Confederate State had become still more dubious, Albert wrote on the 24th of December the following words, which are worth reflection:

'Strict adherence to the Prussian Alliance I consider to be, in spite of everything, a question of life or death for the small States, and am therefore very glad that you zealously adhere to it. The conduct of Saxony and Hanover is beyond all measure mean and dishonourable, and, politically considered, very stupid, particularly on Saxony's part, who has the most need to build herself up to a strong whole again, and to become one; without Prussia, or on the principle of the equalisation of the other States, it is simply impossible. The great sacrifice which is demanded of these powerful (?) Kings, is 1, The renunciation of their especial diplomacy, which has hitherto brought the Kings disgrace rather than honour, is

worth nothing in European politics, and costs a great deal; 2. The renunciation of the Chief Command of the fleet, which they have never had; 3. Ditto of the armies in case of war, which the old Confederate Constitution already demanded just as greatly with a military commission. These three objects will doom Germany to new revolutions and eternal weakness.'

## CHAPTER VII

SECRET OPPOSITION TO THE CONFEDERACY.—CHANGE IN THE AUSTRIAN EMBASSY AT BERLIN.—RENEWED ACTIVITY OF METTERNICH.—HE INTENDS TO ABANDON ENGLAND.—VISITS BELGIUM.—BOASTS OF HIS UNANIMITY WITH KING LEOPOLD.—THE KING'S REAL SENTIMENTS.—HIS LETTERS ON THE SUBJECT.—INFLUENCE OF THE BAVARIAN SISTERS.—PRINCE SCHWARZENBURG'S PROPOSAL FOR AN *ad interim* GOVERNMENT.—LETTER FROM HERR SEEBECK.—KING FREDERICK WILLIAM SUSPICIOUS OF HANOVER AND SAXONY.—FURTHER REPORT FROM SEEBECK.—RUPTURE IN THE CAMP OF THE ALLIES.—THE DUKE INTENDS TO SUPPORT THE PRUSSIAN GOVERNMENT.—VON PEUCKER SUCCEEDS VON RADOWITZ.—MEMORIAL FROM PRINCE LEININGEN.—MUNICH GIVEN UP TO CARNIVAL PLEASURES.—LETTERS FROM ELSHOLTZ.—THE KING OF BAVARIA SPECIALLY DISTINGUISHES THE HANOVERIAN ENVOY.—FAILURE OF FOUR KINGS' ALLIANCE.—PRUSSIA RECALLS HER ENVOY FROM STUTTGART.—AUSTRIAN INVITATION FOR AN ASSEMBLY AT FRANKFORT.—REPORT FROM ELSHOLTZ.

SIDE by side with the elements of the Confederacy which remained firm and vigorously strove to progress, a quietly effective opposition was being made, which extended the suckers of its power abroad through Europe into the higher and highest regions. In the loftiest places, in the midst of the Plenipotentiaries of the Administrative Council, sat our adversaries, attentively watching, where they would be able to divide the meshes of the nets which had been made by the three Kings in a moment of need.

Every fresh member of the Confederacy appeared only to remind these hostile Powers and the sycophants who stood at their elbows that time must not be allowed the work to gain strength.

I have really no idea of considering as my task the living

over again of the sad feelings with which every thinking politician was filled concerning so unpatriotic a policy; the opinion of German patriotic circles could be clearly enough perceived from my brother's letters just quoted, and I shall in the following pages only relate the progress and connexion of the things and events which at that time also were known to but few, and are known to still fewer at the present day.

In March 1849 Count von Trautmannsdorff who, for the past twenty years, had looked after affairs in Berlin, was recalled thence and Herr von Prokesch-Osten was removed from Athens to occupy his place. Although Herr von Prokesch knew very little of German affairs, even having hardly a clear knowledge of the foregoing events, and therefore exposed himself to great vexation in the beginning of his performance of official duties, yet his choice at that moment was nevertheless a very clever move on the part of Prince Schwarzenburg. Prokesch had the reputation of being a man of wit, a Philhellene, an excellent connoisseur of Italy and her arts, and besides that he could also assume political fanaticism for the national interests of Germany, all things which appeared calculated to interest the intellectual and artistic King in the Austrian Ambassador.

Herr von Prokesch also possessed in his manners and appearance a happy combination of versatility and roughness, so that he found a sufficient number of people in Berlin who accepted his assurances as real, and allowed themselves to be convinced that Austria had never meant to be better, more honourable and more honest towards Prussia than now.

He was the right man to win men over to Austria from amongst the reactionary Court circles, whilst at the same time, over the heads of the diplomatists, every intimate family relation was brought to bear in order to bring about the conversion and change of opinion of the King.

We are at the present day informed in the most welcome manner, through Metternich's correspondence with Prokesch, with what passionate eagerness the old fallen Chancellor had again thrown himself into German politics since May 1849, in

order to fight against the Three Kings' Alliance and the Confederate State by every means which lay in his power.

The instructive letters which Metternich sent to Berlin to his most apt pupil, as he called him, were incessant variations of the theme, that the position of German affairs had not altered since 1813, that Prussia's aspirations were only to be fulfilled by means of conquest, and that the States Confederacy was the only possible form in which the old kingdom could remain united.

'The Confederate State,' we now read in Metternich's letters to Prokesch 'is a ghost, a bodiless spectre, an empty sound, without any other possible applicability than to that of a mask for the purpose of the desire for conquest of the kingdom of Prussia.'

Metternich was able, by means of cheap declarations of this kind, to gain influence not only over Herr von Prokesch, but most of all in Vienna, with which, according to him, he diligently corresponded. He constantly repeated the same expressions concerning the impossibility of German unity, and wrote at that time, amongst other things, with no little pride, that in the summer of 1847, he had chiefly annoyed Lord Palmerston by the declaration: *L'Italie est un nom géographique*, and that the same words might perfectly well be applied to Germany, 'which stands with the masses in the second rank of feeling and effort, whilst she is raised to the first place by pure or calculating visionaries, that is, by both honourable and tricky ones.'

It is not at all my opinion that the most decisive weight is to be attributed to the septuagenarian States Chancellor's active agitations against the efforts of Germany and Prussia, but one must not depreciate the consideration which Metternich still enjoyed everywhere in Royal and Government circles.

In the year 1848, there was also a considerable number of high sovereigns in Germany who asked for instructions and directions from the Austrian oracle. In his letters, Metternich expressly numbers the Hereditary Grand-Duke of Mecklenburg amongst the faithful and wise, with whom the Austrian

envoy might freely speak. The Hereditary Grand-Duke himself is the mediator of this same Metternich Constitution which was able to win over partisans at the Court of Berlin, at first in all quietness, then louder and louder still.

In the summer of 1849, it struck Metternich as being proper to abandon England in order to get nearer Continental affairs. In Brussels, he expressed a wish to be allowed to pass the winter in Belgium. The Ministry offered no difficulties, and on the 20th of September, King Leopold himself wrote a very cordial letter to Metternich, in which he gave expression to his pleasure 'that Your Serene Highness has thought of us here, when choosing a place in which to stay; it will really be a satisfaction to me if this visit proves pleasant for you.'

In October, Metternich came over to Belgium, and it was indeed of the greatest psychological interest to see how the clever, lively old man tried to draw my uncle more and more over to his way of thinking. Metternich had unmistakably taken serious pains to influence King Leopold more and more against the Prussian policy. He represented the intentions of the German Princes to form a Confederate State to him as a great danger to European peace, and the King did not fail to give warnings on different sides not to enter the path of the allied Governments, even accusing my brother of favouring a policy which could not but lead to war.

It must have afforded no small satisfaction to the old master of diplomacy to be able to write to Herr von Prokesch in Berlin:

'I fully agree with King Leopold both in feeling and comprehension.' And another time he said:

'King Leopold comprehends the truth. He belongs to the, alas! only too rare class of men who set no store by illusions. His judgment of the state of things accords entirely with mine.'

But the old Prince was mistaken in the King when he thought that the latter had unconditionally adopted Austrian tendencies; what really greatly disturbed him was only the fear that matters might come to a warlike interference on the

part of France in consequence of the Austro-Prussian differences; that, on the other hand, Germany might expect something good to come of the Austrian policy was by no means the opinion of my clear sighted uncle.

The consideration which King Leopold's political judgment will always enjoy in the forum of history will, therefore, be of interest if I introduce himself as the speaker.

At the same time, in which Metternich was boasting so greatly of his unanimity with the King, the latter wrote to me in a somewhat different vein. I had called my uncle's attention as early as the 1st of September 1849 to the importance of the projected Confederate State, and deplored the dislike which prevailed in Germany against Prussia. The reason of this lay, in my opinion, in the fact:—'That they have the talent in Berlin of always appearing worse than they are, and through their manner of carrying out a matter of causing their motives as well as their aims to be forgotten. In this way they make universal opinion hostile, instead of friendly, as it might be. In spite of all this,' I said further, 'what Prussia has done for the countries as well as for the Princes during the past months, is recorded only by thanklessness, because her means are clumsy and her speech does not awaken confidence. Austria cannot forget the old Confederacy and seeks to reinstate it at any price.

'From her point of view, the position which she naturally occupied in the Confederacy, and which became too monstrous an one through her preponderance and the weakness of the remaining members of the Confederacy, is that which must most be striven for. The internally united and strengthened Austria again desires to take the first place in the Confederacy and will then weigh so heavily, that when she still has no allies at all, she alone will decide, and Prussia, in spite of her imagined great power, will represent no more than Saxony and Würtemberg. Whilst Prussia, without being popular, nevertheless retains at least the appearance of nationality, Austria thinks and acts as in the year 1847, and is more popular than the former. Incomprehensible contradiction and confusion of ideas of the people!'

To this my uncle answered on the 28th of September 1849 from Lacken:

'While almost the whole of Europe is in so confused a state and men are unfortunately growing so bad, our people here behave excellently, and *crescendo* better.

'What will now happen in Germany disquiets me greatly. The Prussian Parliaments have the conceivable intention of monopolising Germany; but if she again falls into the hands of great Assemblies, it is quite impossible to say what will become of her, for the people will have no practice and rush headlong into matters.

'My great desire is that they may act practically: before all things, no internal break! When they have got this far, they can meanwhile approach each other somewhat, the circumstances will also force them to this, and finally comes *a closer alliance into existence which might preserve for Germany most of the advantages of a great National Federation.*

'I do not consider anything else possible; if, as has hitherto happened, they proceed in a purely revolutionary manner without any consideration whatever for treaties and national rights, it will come to war. Through this war Germany will in any case be ill-used and torn in the most cruel manner, yet that cannot be the wish and it cannot possibly lead to the proposed and recommended unity; besides this, it would also leave the coast clear for France, who would perhaps try to fish on the left shore of the Rhine as a relief to German unity.

'These are the consequences of the incomprehensible conduct of the Governments in the year 1848, which, without being of use to anyone whomsoever, has brought so much unhappiness to Europe.'

And in December the King writes:

'Things still seem not to be going on in Germany as I wished, yet it pleases me greatly to see that they are better with you. With some degree of courage and understanding it is really not so difficult to reduce the anarchists to order; why the majority is so greatly frightened cannot easily be understood. In all great questions the thing is to avoid any

open struggle and not to begin unity again by killing each other. Such proceedings could only furnish pretexts for breaking lose from Germany, which would be very sad, and also in the highest degree ridiculous.

'The latter does not appear so clear to the Germans at the present moment as it really is, nevertheless it deserves consideration all the more, as up to the present, Germany has not risen in the estimation of other nations through the occurrences of March 1848.

'I am always happy to do everything which can be of use to our universal Fatherland, but interests may be mediated more easily than passions.'

One sees from these epistolary communications that between Prince Metternich's highly simple efforts to bring about a resuscitation of the old States Confederacy and King Leopold's warm feeling for Germany a still more essential difference prevailed, and when the King, in a number of letters to Prince Metternich which now lie before me, emphasises the fact that the balance of accounts of the first half of the nineteenth century did not appear to be very favourable in a political sense, or that that 'to which we must hold fast, is the public right,' 'and that the changes forced by circumstances should be obtained by means of open and honourable understanding,' these utterances of King Leopold's did not agree with that sum of reflections and doubtful intentions which just then began to show themselves in Vienna, Munich, Dresden and Hanover.

It is a known fact that the Bavarian sisters on the thrones of Prussia, Saxony and Austria at that time mixed themselves up in political affairs somewhat deeper than would well have been useful to the development of Germany.

But concerning the web of feminine actions in these deeply important affairs of official circles, history will unfortunately never again furnish authorised disclosures, as the decisive correspondences have been lost for ever in consequence of orders given respecting them.

As regards the acknowledgment of the disturbing influences which made themselves felt since September 1849 in the

German efforts towards union, the correct solution will meantime be obtained from the official Government correspondences.

The first move which Prince Schwarzenburg undertook against the alliance of sovereigns, was the proposa of a Government *ad interim*, which should assume the Central Power in place of the retiring administrator of the Empire. The German Confederate Governments were to agree upon a Government *ad interim* in unison with the Administrator of the Empire, according to which Austria and Prussia 'in the name of all the Confederate Governments are jointly to look to the maintenance of the Confederate community until the first of May 1850, in as far as its new formation will not definitely follow sooner, according to the measures of the agreement made here.'

The full Powers which Prussia and Austria were to possess in order to preserve the united Confederacy and the united Confederate territory were of a very extensive nature, and as they tried to make Austria's former influence felt in Frankfort under the cloak of the Government *ad interim*, the Berlin work of union was in the greatest degree threatened. Every unprejudiced mind recognised the danger, and the Plenipotentiaries in the Administrative Council had as early as the middle of September earnestly striven against the consequences of the Austrian proposals.

At a meeting of a number of the members of the Administrative Council, the representative of the Thuringian States, Herr Seebeck represented to his colleagues that Austria's proposal aimed at the restoration of a new provisory Central Power with the quality of a formal Confederate Government, and that with and under this not one portion of the Confederate Governments would be able to constitute itself as a Confederate State with a joint Government, according to the rules of the bill for the Constitution of the 26th of May, as the competencies of both Powers, would be to all appearances, broken up.

'I further threw light,' wrote Herr Seebeck 'on the difficult position of Prussia, who, in face of the necessity of

being in harmony on the one side with Austria, on the other with a college of princes, with a State and a National Parliament, the impossibility of reconciling the contradiction of two systems of Government which are distinctive in principle, would very soon go to her own ruin. To frustrate the formation of the closer States Alliance was also plainly one of the chief aims of the Austrian project. This was mainly apparent from the fact that the object of the Government *ad interim* was expressly pointed out as being to keep up the Confederacy as an indissoluble union of *all* the German States for the object pointed out in the Confederate Act, and that the *definite* establishment of a new Confederate Constitution depended upon the universal assent of the members of the Confederacy.'

One sees from this communication of Seebeck's that the tendency of the Austrian proposals had at once been rightly understood, so that the proceedings of Prince Schwarzenburg could by no means be said to be delicate or difficult to understand. No! with full knowledge of the matter, with full consciousness of what he was doing, King Frederick William IV allowed himself to be lured into the net of the Austrian Confederate project.

Under these circumstances even the doubt was not left unspoken, whether the initiative in the attempts to bring about an understanding had not emanated from the King himself.

It is true that the individual conditions of the agreement concerning the Central Power *ad interim* were to some degree amended and modified by the Prussian Government, but the settlement had already taken place in Vienna on the 30th of September. In this also it was plain that, behind the back of the Prussian Cabinet, powers were active which had entirely different aims in view than those of the closer Confederate State.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs was obliged in the Administrative Council to make the shameful declaration 'that so quick a settlement of the agreement through the envoy in Vienna had been unexpected by the Ministry, and

was all the more unpleasant, as they had had the intention to agree beforehand with the allies of the Crown of Prussia.'

When in the next session of the Administrative Council Herr von Bodelschwingh brought forward the rectified agreement, and requested the members to deliver their opinion on it, the Plenipotentiaries of Saxony, Hanover and Mecklenburg-Strelitz expressed their lively pleasure and satisfaction at the bringing about of such a solution of the German entanglement.

Nevertheless the Prussian Government thought it necessary in some degree to reassure those members of the Confederacy who took the German question seriously:—

'When bringing forward the bill for the convention, Herr von Bodelschwingh expressly said that Prussia, as she had for her part accepted this bill, would, with Austria, propose it to the remaining Governments. He further gave the assurance that Prussia would only regard herself as the representative of our Confederacy in the Imperial Commission, and would never agree to measures which might be beyond the limits of the most ordinary administrative arrangements, without first obtaining the full consent of her allies. She would particularly allow no interference which might be a hindrance to the formation of the closer Confederate State.'

Meanwhile King Frederick William had nevertheless grown somewhat suspicious on account of the zealous furthering of the Central Power *ad interim* on the part of Hanover and Saxony, they doing everything at the same time to prevent the establishment of a Diet in the closer Confederacy. He expressed his lively indignation against individual members of the Administrative Council as regarded the equivocation of the Middle States, and declared in his apparently decided way that he was resolved on boldly pursuing the path which Prussia had once entered and on the speedy restoration of the closer alliance. Saxony and Hanover had found a real motive for opposition to the Confederate State in the question of the announcement of the election for the Imperial Diet until the 15th of January. The memorable session in which the two kingdoms first revealed

themselves in their true forms took place on the 9th of October.

The exciting occurrences of this session may be recalled to memory from a report of Seebeck's:

'Going back to the council which recently took place, Herr von Bodelschwingh proposed to empower the Prussian Government to declare that in consequence of the decision of the preponderant majority of the Administrative Council, the voting for the Diet must go on until the 18th of January. The Saxon Plenipotentiary hereupon said that it was not necessary to declare himself, the question of the Chairman could rather be regarded as addressed to the members of the majority. He remarked besides, that if the majority of the allied Governments decided upon proceeding in this manner only, the division could not fail to be regarded as a fact.

'The final conclusion was therefore again put off by the Chairman. To my thinking, Prussia is, after this open notice of her honest will, all the less to be abandoned by those Governments which are blest with similar opinions, as the moral impression which this unanimous proceeding on the part of the majority must universally make, is the only thing which will allow us to hope for a change in the division of the new Royal Courts of Hanover and Saxony.

'I am all the more justified in this supposition, as the Hanoverian Plenipotentiary himself pointed out with great care 'that such conduct might have an effect on his Government which would alter its firm attitude.

'At the close of the session the same Plenipotentiary proposed to the Administrative Council a preservative measure against the establishment of a closer Confederate State, concerning which an immediate council could not naturally take place at once.

'The Prussian Government is in the act of drawing up a refutation and will bring it to the Administrative Council at the next session. Apart from the weakness of the Hanoverian legal execution, I think that the forsworn Governments have greatly injured their cause by altering it from a question of opportunity to a question of right. Herr von Lepel has

given us a protocol from Darmstadt—a complete, clear, and dignified deduction of the above-mentioned question of rights, in which he has reserved the prosecution of both royal Governments for the arbitration of his own Government.'

The break in the camp of the allies was deeper and more incurable than had been expected. Prussia's decided action might for a moment afford some consolation for the state of things, but the tendency of the Kings to break up the Confederacy was hardly to be doubted any longer. They could not find encomiums enough for Frederick William, the Count of Brandenburg, the chairman of the Administrative Council, Herr von Bodelschwingh.

The decided summons to proceed which the latter called out to the members of the Confederacy, had, for some time, revived the vanishing hopes placed on Prussia in the smaller States also, and the moment again arrived when Prussia was able to win the sympathy of Germany.

When, at the end of October, the news again spread that the Saxon and Hanoverian Plenipotentiaries, Herr von Zeschau and Herr von Wangenheim, had retired from the Administrative Council, the national displeasure turned greatly against the hostile Middle States.

Their conduct appeared all the more deceitful, when it became known that Herr von Wangenheim had only announced his personal retirement, and Hanover was accordingly playing a double part.

For my part, I had firmly decided upon henceforth supporting the Prussian Government in every way I could. On the 5th of December, I had a note drawn up, in which I declared myself as agreeing fully with the course adopted by the Crown of Prussia, regardless of the anomalous views of the royal Saxon and the royal Hanoverian Governments, and issued orders for bringing about the elections for the Diet. I met with the greatest difficulties in my own lands while taking these steps, as Coburg particularly, at whose head Bröhmer stood, although his dismissal had now become a positive necessity, opposed them to the utmost.

As matters stood, Prussia could not have the slightest

grounds for complaint, at least as regarded the smaller States, and had to be kept to her good intentions in every way. I strove to win over the observant circles to this view, not only in my own lands, but worked unceasingly on the Courts with which I was related, or friendly, to trust themselves fully to Prussian leadership.

The unexpected energy which Prussia developed for the moment really had not failed to make some impression in the Middle States.

On the 11th of December Herr von Seebeck made a communication which might inspire the belief that the faithless Kings found it advisable to think of a line of retreat:

'I have heard from several well-informed sources, that an inclination has been manifested from Bavaria and Würtemberg to take part in the meeting of the Diet to the extent of sending Government commissioners for negotiation with the same and its administrative council. It is, indeed, a question whether and how far the basis on which such an approach is desired, namely increase of the authority of the College of Princes, can possibly be admitted.

'But it is remarkable, that the incitement to this step has gone out from Hanoverian statesmen in Munich and Stuttgart, from whom, on account of the attitude hitherto adopted by them, this was least to be expected. It was really not to be wondered at that an unprejudiced glance into the future made our adversaries in the Middle States more and more conscious of the dangers of their position.'

The uncertainty and unsafety of the issue of events were still so great, that even the most incarnate adversaries of Prussia, such as Herr von der Pfordten, did not entirely venture to come forward and formally cast the gauntlet to the Confederate State; a few weeks later secret influences nevertheless succeeded in overcoming this shyness in Munich. They were working at an alliance which had for its aim the thorough and permanent abolition of the Confederate State.

Four Confederate commissioners at Frankfort arrived in all secrecy during the last day of December, two from Prussia and two from Austria, in order to receive the Central Power

from the hands of the Arch-Duke John, the reason given being the agreement of September 30th.

The latter allowed the very sorry part which he played in this matter to be sweetened by means of manifold ovations and military serenades. Whether the old gentleman had a feeling of the irony of fate, that he, who a year and a half previously had entered as a national magnate amidst the cries of rejoicing of the Frankforters, now departed with a torch-light procession of Bohemian soldiers, is not known to me, but the Prince of Prussia had the difficult mission reserved for him of being obliged to make his compliments to the Administrator of the Empire at Frankfort, in person.

The unity of the Confederate commission was not very great at first, and General von Radowitz, who, with Bötticher, had been sent by Prussia, took all conceivable pains to get himself removed from this post as quickly as possible.

His place was taken by General von Peucker, who was able to establish better relations with the Austrian statesmen, von Kübeck and General Schönhals. The newspapers inspired by Austria assured that all differences, if not yet entirely settled, were, nevertheless, very nearly smoothed over. Whatever could be done by Austria in order to restore peace in the Government *ad interim*, was understood thus, that all possible means were being applied in order to put an end to Prussia's intentions to form a Confederate State out of the way. The strongest levers were set in motion in Munich to this effect. For the present, it is true, the desired unanimity between Austria and the Middle States was of but a very negative nature. On the 28th of November, Austria had raised a formal protest against the summoning of a Diet, Bavaria at once followed this example, and Würtemberg, Hanover and Saxony also came forward in the course of December with mighty protestations.

In spite of all their affinity of feeling, however, the four Kings had been unable to bring forward any joint declaration. Bavaria still retained a careful attitude towards Prussia, on account of the uncertainty of Austria's designs. In the Bavarian declaration, Prussia is not exactly accused of

wishing to undertake anything against the safety of the Confederacy and the individual Confederate States, but hints that this would be the necessary consequence of the Alliance of May 26.

Würtemberg deplores the dissension between the two largest German States in the German question, and only wishes to prevent discord from being sown amongst the German Confederate stock by the summoning of national representatives.

Saxony and Hanover, as fellow wrong-doers in the alliance of May 26, naturally turned and twisted round with somewhat greater difficulty, in longer deductions, to the Austrian protest. The Hanoverian Government finally abandoned the prosaic official style, and turned with entreaties full of feeling to the Prussian Government, that they would yet give up the intended measure of summoning a Diet, in the interests of peace and order.

Seebeck remarked very much to the point in a letter of January 18, 1850, in which he gave a report of these protests:

'One must remember how the Imperial Cabinet principally supports its protest on the stand taken by the four royal Courts, and says, that, if this opposition did not exist, it would regard the whole question quite differently, and then see how, here, the royal Governments take Austria's plea as a prop, our adversaries' game lies plainly enough before us. But a lasting stand is not to be expected from such a union, and I also hear even now, from very trustworthy authority, that the four royal Governments, just because the good understanding between Austria and Prussia, against which they so pressingly warn, appears to be to some degree restored, are turning their intentions into a new channel.

'It is said that negotiations are in hand for making joint proposals to Prussia concerning the constitution of the Confederate State. Whether and how this is the case, will not long remain concealed.'

The Austrian Government had really not yet entirely renounced eventually coming to an understanding with Prussia in spite of the four Kings.

Prince Schwarzenburg next supplied himself with a double set of cards. If they succeeded in leading back the King of Prussia into the Austrian reactionary line, he was very ready and willing to cast the so-called interests of the Middle States to the four winds of heaven, and he had all his sympathies ready for the four Kings, should Prussia insist on her German policy.

As regarded the former, they had made all possible attempts in Frankfort. Austria even recalled to recollection the first Imperial Ministry under the presidency of Prince Leiningen, in order to spread the idea of an Austro-Prussian understanding, and they seem to have regarded my cousin as a fit personage to recommend the alliance plans between the two great Powers in those circles which they rightly supposed would be entirely disinclined towards it.

Towards the end of the year Prince Leiningen sent a memorial to me and all my relations from Frankfort, which was doubtless inspired by Austria, and which reads as follows:—

'The efforts of all those who have hitherto numbered amongst the German patriots must now therefore be directed towards:—

'1. Union between Austria and Prussia—by means of every possible removal of all hindrances, which stand in the way of such a union, and (2) defending the real constitutional freedom on the one hand; on the other, working according to strength that, as far as is possible considering altered relations and an altered form, that may be fulfilled which would have been expected and hoped for from a united Germany.'

What was said in Prince Leiningen's detailed memorial as a reason for these views, pointed unmistakably to the contents of the Austrian notes, and towards the settlement of the Government *ad interim*.

Leiningen's treatise was not, therefore, able to bring about the desired effect; as regarded myself, I was as will immediately be shown, only too closely informed, particularly from Munich, of Prince Schwarzenburg's double game; and my

brother was so very anti-Austrian, that our cousin's appearance in her favour only embittered him the more. Even Lord Palmerston had not been quite able to conform entirely with Prince Albert's views of the German Confederate States question.

Meanwhile, the more dangerous the Austrian enticements and protestations of friendship might become to the relations of the Court of Berlin, the more important and necessary it appeared to me to receive accurate information of the events which took place at the royal Courts.

I was so lucky as to possess in Elsholtz so excellent and sharp-sighted an observer of things in Munich, that I really succeeded through him in discovering the negotiations of the four Kings and the conclusion of their alliance at a time when the matter was still to be kept a profound secret.

The news had unfortunately been prematurely inserted in the *Kölnische Zeitung* through abominable indiscretion, and not only excited extraordinary and unpleasant attentions, but bore for my Munich diplomatist the tragic consequence that he was forced to withdraw from the business. The reader will conceive the whole affair most clearly from the letters of Elsholtz himself, the most entertaining contents of which I can only quote where they regard the principal question.

In the winter of 1849-1850 Munich society had fully given itself up to social and carnival pleasures, as if desiring to make up for the neglect of the past years. But in the diplomatic world of Munich, however, the great opposition which penetrated through the whole of Germany, was not to be thus stilled. The Austrian envoy Count Frederick Thun, was surrounded by a large portion of the elegant world, whereas the Prussian envoy found but scanty followers and stood in a very isolated position. Whilst the Austrian statesmen were still able in some measure to cloak the fact that they had inconsiderately thrown themselves into the arms of the Catholic Church, the Ultramontanes in Munich were already raising their heads more openly and freely.

Thus this was the proper wrestling-place of all Catholic

and Protestant hostile efforts, and Elsholtz gave me a very gay description of the doings of these parties:

'The treatment of the Court towards the Diplomatic Corps being so extremely economical, the latter has only been allowed to approach the Royal Family at Carnival time, this has taken place twice during the past week. First at a masked academy in the Odson, the entrance to which is by invitation of the Master of the Ceremonies, but which has nevertheless to be paid for, and then at a large Court ball, to which all who are capable of appearing are summoned. The latter may not incorrectly be regarded as a festival of union for the divided diplomacy. But, as the union was only an outward one, the internal schism was only made more apparent on this occasion.

'The larger half swam in the blissful sea of royal preference, that is, the so-called high Germans, or Austria's train bearers; the other half stood solitary and untouched by the wind of power, which swelled the sails of the other. But the most amusing of all was the conqueror's mien of the royal Hanoverian *Chargé d'Affaires,* whose personally offensive manner was immensely increased by the conspicuous importance which one here sees so lavishly attributed to the friendship of his and all other Governments which are averse to the Prussian alliance. I therefore listened with great amusement, as follower, to a conversation between the said von dem Knesebeck and the royal Saxon *Chargé d'Affaires,* concerning the Assembly at Plochingen, which was regarded as very suspicious by the latter, and could hardly refrain from laughing when Herr von dem Knesebeck, with an inimitable expression, as if being the highest power he felt himself touched, broke out: "Yes, the matter is also exceedingly unpleasant for me." Meantime, it must be added in explanation, in order to obtain belief in such innocence, that a few minutes before His Majesty the King had, after eluding me, turned to him and, as at the masked ball, conversed for some time with the happy man, and that His Excellency, Minister von der Pfordten did not omit to show attentions to his political fellow-believer, which remained implacably denied

to me, the solitary antipode. . . . As for the rest, it must be admitted, that the Austrian envoy is the most natural in his attitude towards the train of satellites, and as real power always appears the least assuming, the aim being to *use* this power rather than to show it, the essential influence of his inspirations over the course of local politics cannot be contradicted.'

It was looked upon as one of the greatest political events in carnival-maddened Munich, when, at one of the next Court balls, the King made the Hanoverian envoy the object of the rarest distinctions:

'But what was to be considered by the observer as the most important moment of the festival, amidst all this esteem and wonder, consisted in the fact that the King's Majesty, in the presence of the wives of the Ambassadors of Russia, England, Prussia and Austria, opened the ball with the spouse of the Hanoverian *Chargé d'Affaires* which needs no further comment, but may produce a disquieting impression in so far that the reaction of this unheard-of occurrence on the fortunate husband is one which cannot be calculated. Shortly afterwards he acted towards Prince William of Prussia, the father of the Queen, who was present, having happily recovered from his illness, as if towards an equal.

'In his joy, he even met me in a more friendly manner than ever he had done before, and informed me as a piece of news, that he, in the person of his errand-boy, a former servant of mine, whose intellectual powers were therefore very accurately, although not advantageously, known to me,—that he had sent this fellow as courier with despatches to Hanover, whence he had already safely returned.

'Excellent joke as this communication appeared to me, I contented myself with the pious remark: "What cannot God make of people!" to which my interlocutor, although somewhat embarrassed gave his consent. I think it right to remark at the close, that the passionate preference for the Four-Kings'-League, for which people are working here, shows as yet no certain symptoms of success.

'Well informed persons are of the opinion that Austria

takes a less lively part in it than is desired, and that the decision is delayed for that reason.'

As regards the latter, affairs cleared in a very short time. It was understood that Hanover did not wish to take part unconditionally in the settlement of the Middle States, but was decided on honestly helping the opposition against the Prussian Confederate State. The other three kingdoms, however, really concluded the alliance aimed against Germany in a few weeks, through Austria's mediation. Elsholtz reported the course of events step by step, with great accuracy:

'*Munich, February* 17.

'Finally, I allow myself to add, that the royal Hanoverian *Chargé d'Affaires* here suddenly left for Hanover the day before yesterday, presumably in order to furnish his royal master with suitable verbal explanations of the Four Kings' negotiations which have taken place here, concerning the real existence of which there no longer remains a doubt, on account of which many, especially those of the same mind, infer and foretell a happy result and a speedy appearance, but for me, and that not without reason, it shows a probability of the contrary, concerning which I shall in a few days be able to furnish more particular explanations, as a lucky, if daring combination has succeeded in bringing into my possession all the papers relating to these conferences, and whose contents, should I not succeed in obtaining copies, shall be communicated at least in the form of an epitome and very summarily.'

'*Munich, February* 22*nd.*

'It must be accepted as a certain fact, that in the German question the monarch's confidence in his Ministers is at least not shaken, that, rather, a perfect understanding prevailed here, even that if a lessening of the trustfulness make itself felt here it must be sought for more on the side of the Ministers than on that of the King, who, in the Austrian conditions and proposals, with which, presumably, a goal has been reached

which cannot be passed, is said not to perceive the danger and the consequences which the Ministers pretend to see therein.

'. . . . I therefore dare add only this here, that according to the close insight into the condition of the affair, only the monarchs, but not their responsible counsellors are inclined to fall headlong into the suspicious high German Alliance under the Austrian *sine quâ non* conditions, because the former feel themselves relieved from the strict responsibility which unrelentingly falls on the shoulders of the latter. This is the feeling in Hanover, as it is here, less so perhaps in Stuttgart and Dresden, where *everything* has the appearance of incessantly pressing forward towards the desired goal.'

'*Munich, February 25th.*

'. . . . I do not hesitate to communicate the news, as important as it is authorised, from the same source, that the so-called Four Kings' Alliance is as good as broken up, or is at least threatened with a wide rupture, as Hanover refuses her signature, and if not without reserve intentions, has nevertheless for the moment refused to take any part whatever in it. After hard struggles, and in spite of the strongest guarantees on the part of the *Chargé d'Affaires*, who has been recalled hence, the King has at length listened to the well-founded representation of his Ministers, backed by the offer of their resignation, and allowed himself to be brought to the above decision under condition that a formal renunciation of the Prussian Alliance should follow at the same time, according to which the suitable instructions should be brought about on both sides.

'It has therefore been declared in Berlin through the Hanoverian envoy, that this Government considers their connection with the agreement of May 26, 1849 to be entirely broken off, and their relations to those taking part in the same brought back to the foundation of the German Confederacy, whereas, as regarded Austria, the reasons were developed why they could not take part in the meeting agreed upon to take place in Munich,—reasons which are

mostly borrowed from the geographical position of the country. None the less has Herr von dem Knesebeck, who returned yesterday evening, apparently greatly dissatisfied with the result of his efforts, been commissioned to make the proper confidential communications to the Government here as well as to that of Würtemberg concerning Hanover's position, with the addition of the wish and the unalterable readiness further to offer help in a confidential co-operation for the favourable formation of the work of the German Constitution.

'Thus, in both directions, as similar wishes for the continuance of the good understanding were brought forward in Berlin also, the Hanoverian Government will keep the way clear in order to be able to side with the stronger according to circumstances, as, before arriving at a determination, the King wavered helplessly for a long time, even for a while giving room to the thought of satisfying his Austro-Bavarian sympathies by means of a change of Ministry. Whether under these circumstances, the signature of the arranged agreement, which has now almost become a certainty here, will still be made, must be waited for, and will doubtless soon depend upon the instructions which are to be expected from Dresden, where the announcement has already arrived from Hanover and whose decision now appears doubly important, as, should Saxony not follow Hanover's example, the end is only half gained, and Austria, according to an official utterance of the President of the Ministry here, is strongly suspected of wishing to withdraw entirely in case of failure to arrive at a complete understanding and to make common cause with Prussia at the expense of the four kingdoms.'

'*Munich, February 28th.*

'I do not for a moment delay giving news of the secret which is still enveloped in the deepest mystery, that the agreement spoken of here between Austria and the middle kingdoms was signed yesterday by the Plenipotentiaries of Bavaria, Würtemberg and Saxony. The royal Hanoverian *Chargé d'Affaires* has not been summoned to the conferences

at all since his return, but has nevertheless retained the possibility for his Government, in as far as it might find itself moved, to take part. . . . .

'Besides this, Count Hohenthal, the royal Saxon *Chargé d'Affaires*, has not once considered it necessary to wait for either fresh instructions or the arrival of Privy Councillor of the Legation von Carlowitz, who is to be sent hither, and has signed on the strength of the instructions sent him some time ago, in order, as it appears, neither to postpone his departure, nor to be allowed to resign this important business, which would perhaps win orders for him, to another; how strong pressure on the part of Bavaria and Würtemberg may then be expected from fear of new desertion.'

Little unity as was shown amongst the enemies of the Confederate State, as is seen from the preceding report, they nevertheless did not fail to announce to the world, when, on the 27th of February the act of the new Confederate State was signed and made welcome by Austria, that Germany 'was saved through the unselfish intentions of the Middle States.' The hoped for Four Kings' Alliance had, it is true, now fallen away to a Three Kings' Alliance, and in Berlin the King's conduct by no means showed depression, but a momentary bitterness and exaltation; nevertheless Minister von der Pfordten exhibited no small self-consciousness in the Bavarian Diet concerning his performances, and laid the act of the Confederacy before the houses on the 13th of March. The contents of the agreement had already been made known through the newspapers.

Once again the real German thought was to be awakened to life, as a national representation and a Confederate tribunal were placed side by side with the Confederate Government, and afforded the German nation a prospect that 300 members selected from the assemblies of the country should regularly assemble in Frankfort at the seat of the Confederate Government. Of these 300 a full third should fall upon Austria, which was just in the act of furnishing to the whole world the proof that a constitutional state of things in her interior was impossible and impracticable. The Confederate Government

itself was formed by the much appealed to seven voices: Austria, Prussia, Bavaria, Saxony, Hanover, Würtemberg and the two Hesses, leaving it free to the remaining States 'to ally themselves with either the one or the other of the seven, as long as agnatic or otherwise lawful hereditary relations do not stipulate for a connection with either the one or the other voices.' The whole project contained as little that was new as it furnished the least probability of being able to be seriously and honourably furthered by Austria.

The hopes the Middle States entertained of enlarging somewhat on this occasion at the expense of the smaller ones, and thus making the desired unity impossible for any length of time, was clothed by one of their statesmen in the following words: 'It appears to me that the waves will run high for a long time still and the boat, in which thirty-five sit, must turn over, it will then be seen who can survive.' But the allied Governments plainly declared in the collective note which they addressed to Austria and Prussia at the same time, that they perceived the free development of the German national spirit only in the undiminished maintenance of the dualism of Austria and Prussia, through whom the power of the small Kings of the Rhine League would remain for ever assured. In Austria's answer, the openness with which she declared her intentions had become somewhat uncomfortable to the royal Cabinets. Prince Schwarzenburg not only announced his consent to the proposals of the three Governments with the very categorical remark that he saw in it the impassable foundation of all further negotiations, but he also seized the opportunity of demanding Austria's admittance with all her lands, as this was neither contrary to the rights, the conformableness nor the interests of Germany.

So absolute and rough a speech on the part of the Austrian Government, concerning questions which touched the more vital interests of the German nation, exceeded, by far, everything which could be remembered concerning the Metternich Confederate times, and was not exactly calculated to raise many friends for the new Kings' Alliance. Nevertheless the King of Würtemberg thought he might give rein to his

hostility against Prussia. But when Prussia recalled her envoy from Stuttgart, and handed the envoy of Würtemberg in Berlin his passport, the whole of North Germany began to lose courage, and if a strong hand in Berlin had wished to make use of such symptoms, they must have arrived at the conviction that but little courage was hidden behind the sonorous phrases of the agreements and the notes of the Middle States Governments.

When it became known a few weeks later that Prussia was seriously beginning to equip, Elsholtz sent me word from Munich that a complete panic had set in at the Court, and that the anxiety had become fearful, lest the days of the greatness of the Middle States were numbered.

Added to all this, the Austrian Government revealed itself as it was more and more every day, and with a degree of impudence which awakened the most painful feelings in Munich and Stuttgart. As after the withdrawal of Vienna on the 30th of September, the temporary Government of May 1, 1850 came to an end in Frankfort, Austria issued without further ceremony an invitation to all the German Governments to assemble in Frankfort up to May 10, in order definitely to deliberate on and complete the re-organisation of the Confederacy.

No one could see in this measure anything beyond the summoning of the old Confederate Diet, and although it was the same Count Thun who had stood sponsor to the Munich negotiations, who now went to Frankfort as royal and Imperial presiding Plenipotentiary, Herr von der Pfordten appeared to feel somewhat uneasy on account of Prince Schwarzenburg's hotspur proceedings, for although they sang triumphant songs over the course of things in Munich, they nevertheless wished to have certain points of egress free, and Herr von der Pfordten even sent for me once in the midst of the bustle of restoration in the Frankfort Confederate Diet, to ask me as the person most fitted for the business, to attempt to bring about an understanding with Prussia.

Concerning these attempts, Elsholtz wrote, in his humorous way, a report with which I will most fitly close the depiction

of the doings which were still being carried on by the Middle States, when the Prussian Government already hoped to urge decisive resolutions in Erfurt and Berlin.

'. . . On this occasion,' wrote Elsholtz, 'the honourable Minister-President gave vent to the utterance that Prussia's union with the small North German Princes might well be admitted, but that they would in no case negotiate with or recognise the Erfurt Alliance, as long as Baden remained in the hands of Prussia and, as Herr von der Pfordten expressed it, was governed by the Prussian Government, as Bavaria especially must and would spurn all foreign influence which wished to spread over South Germany and the cities which belonged to her, Frankfort and Mainz.

'This was pretty much the substance of his speech, which was not received by me without some modest objections, but was finally accompanied by an important remark for the Honourable Minister-President. He declared, that his Government, which, filled with the purest unselfishness, desired nothing for itself (!), urgently desired a union and understanding, and my most Gracious Sovereign the Duke, to whom he, Herr von der Pfordten, had the honour to be very well known personally,—that, His Highness the Duke was certainly especially fitted and called upon to help on such a union and to work for it in Berlin. I at once promised to make proper use of this benevolent view, for which I did not fail to express my thoughts, and therefore beg—mindful of the parting words of our most Gracious Sovereign and his greeting lately entrusted to me for Herr von der Pfordten, and which is most difficult to deliver,—to be allowed not to withhold the above communication from Your Highness.'*

* A few months later Elsholtz was overtaken by fate and the Hanoverian Government demanded his withdrawal from the diplomatic service. Herr von Elsholtz was hereupon given leave by my Government, and the Bavarian Government declared the matter to be entirely settled by the recall of my envoy. The diplomatic interlude was ended in November.

## CHAPTER VIII

THE DIET OF ERFURT.—THE KING OF PRUSSIA TAKES THE OATH OF THE REVISED CONSTITUTION.—ACTIVITY OF HERR VON SEEBECK.—EULOGIUM ON HIM IN LETTERS TO PRINCE ALBERT.—KING LEOPOLD'S OPPOSITION TO PRUSSIA AND THE CONFEDERATE STATES.—INFLUENCE OF PRINCE METTERNICH.—LETTER FROM PRINCE ALBERT TO KING LEOPOLD.—VISIT OF PRINCE LEININGEN TO THE DUKE.—MISREPRESENTATIONS OF THE AUSTRIAN PRESS.—LETTER FROM PRINCE ALBERT TO THE PRINCE OF PRUSSIA.—PERSONAL VIEWS OF THE ENGLISH REPRESENTATIVES IN GERMANY.—STOCKMAR ELECTED FOR THE ERFURT PARLIAMENTSHIP.—RADOWITZ NOMINATED AS COMMISSIONER.—UNANIMITY OF THE ASSEMBLY.—FATAL INFLUENCE OF THE ELECTORATE OF HESSE.—VON CARLOWITZ WISHES TO RESIGN.—OVERRULED BY THE DUKE'S PERSUASIONS.—LETTER TO PRINCE ALBERT.—HIS REPLY.—SECOND LETTER AS TO THE ERFURT PARLIAMENT.—UNEASINESS OF RADOWITZ AND THE PRUSSIAN STATESMEN.—ACCEPTANCE OF THE CONSTITUTION.—ATTACKS BY THE PRESS OF BERLIN.—SEEBECK'S REPORT OF THE 20TH OF APRIL.—SERIOUS RUMOURS AS TO AUSTRIA'S INTENTIONS.—THE SESSION OF PARLIAMENT DECLARED TO BE CLOSED.—THE KING OF PRUSSIA ISSUES INVITATIONS TO A CONGRESS OF PRINCES.—PROPOSED CONGRESS OF PRINCES AT GOTHA.—DEBATE IN ST AUGUSTINE.—THE KING OF PRUSSIA AGREES TO PRESIDE AT THE CONGRESS.—CHANGES HIS MIND.—SUMMONS A CONGRESS AT BERLIN.—REASONS ADDUCED FOR CHANGE.—THE KING'S LETTER TO DUKE ERNEST.—APPOINTS HIM COMMANDER OF CUIRASSIERS.—CORRESPONDENCE WITH PRINCE ALBERT.—THE CONGRESS AT BERLIN.—RECEPTION OF THE PRINCES AND SPEECH BY THE KING.—THE PRINCES' DISCUSSION COMPLETED.—THE KING NOT PLEASED.—THE ELECTOR OF HESSE INIMICAL.—CONCLUSION OF THE CONGRESS.—SPEECH OF FREDERICK WILLIAM.—CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN THE DUKE AND PRINCE ALBERT.

WHILST they were preparing everywhere in the German Confederate States for the elections to the Erfurt Parliament, and had in many lands to overcome the most indescribable difficulties, in order to complete the work, the confidence in

Prussia's future and her German position had grown mighty in Berlin through the final establishment of the Prussian constitution and the happy close of the negotiations. In the Allied States, where despondency and bad will, in South Germany, where disfavour and vanity made themselves felt against the Prussian leadership of German affairs, the fact that Prussia had joined the list of Constitutional States could not fail to produce an effect.

When, on the 6th of February, the King appeared in the Hall of Knights in the castle before the united members of both Houses, preceded by the States Ministry and accompanied by the Prince, and accepted and took the oath of the revised Constitution of January 31st, 1850, the moment had again arrived when the numerous neglects of the past two years could without any doubt be repaired and many a mistake be made good.

Even during the ceremony, the King unreservedly abandoned himself to his well-known inclination to do and say everything in the freest possible speech, which might lessen the impression made by the matter on his friends, but in spite of all presupposed mystical and obscure dogmas relating to the public law, the importance of the act could not fail to be recognised by any clear-sighted politician.

A difficulty arose for the German Constitution, as it had been accepted as the foundation of the Alliance of May 26th, from the opposition in which many conditions of the Prussian Constitution now confirmed by oath by the King stood to German bills which were still influenced by the Frankfort decrees, but it was all the more important to hasten the convocation of the Erfurt Parliament in every way, in order to remove these oppositions all the more quickly.

The Administrative Council of the Allied States had therefore adopted a very sensible point of view, when it in no way found fault with the alterations in the election laws of the single States, which became necessary to the people as well as to the State, but wished to see the decision and examination of the elections which had been accomplished left to Parliament itself.

In Coburg and Gotha the activity and circumspection of a man whom I had luckily just placed at the head of the Ministry, had succeeded, in spite of all the opposition which had shortly before been raised, in completing the elections, somewhat late, yet still in time. Herr von Seebeck has remained my States Minister since the year 1849 until the present day, and has therefore successfully conducted the affairs of my Duchies for nearly forty years, perhaps a solitary existing example in the constitutional States relations of latter times.

He was by conviction a partisan of the Confederate State movement under Prussian leadership, and acted decidedly everywhere with a great deal of luck. As I now for the first time in these notes mention this amiable man, who invariably supported me with the greatest fidelity I may perhaps be allowed to repeat the words of acknowledgment which I at once paid him in a former letter to my brother:

'When Stein partially withdrew from affairs this summer, and I was forced to lay the Ministerial business of Gotha in the hands of the Directors of the chief National College, I recognised the absolute necessity of forming a new, strong Ministry, whose first task should be to allow the work of union of both countries to enter into existence, and, as a natural consequence, to recognise all jurisdictions.

'How difficult it was for me to find a new Ministry, and what sufferings this provisory state of things caused me, I think I have already written you. At length I have found in Herr von Seebeck a talented, still young man, whose upright, yet conciliatory character had won him the respect of all, and who has made the best impression here also. He belongs to the Conservative-Liberal party, and especially to the large number of intelligent Saxons who have remained faithful to the German cause, and who have voted in the Dresden Parliament for Saxony's adoption into Prussia's closer confederacy.

'Thus the very same policy which we have adopted here, and to which you have also devoted yourself.'

Internal and external, home and universal German relations rendered a meeting with my brother urgently necessary,

in which Minister von Seebeck was also to take part. I started for London, as my brother declared his inability to leave England, on the 19th of February, by way of Cologne, Brussels and Calais, and found many opportunities of obtaining enlightening influence on political circles both in and out of England.

The first thing to be done was to give King Leopold a more correct representation of German affairs. I found him completely and entirely set against Prussia and the Confederate States, partly through Metternich's influence in Brussels, partly through the reports and efforts of Leiningen. It was very difficult to make it clear to him, who had for a long time no longer had any immediate insight into the condition of things in the small States, that Austria could no longer be looked upon as the highest and best guarantee for the existence and rights of the smaller princely Houses.

The King would not believe that Austria would rather give up the smaller States in favour of a division of Germany into seven homogeneous Middle States. Prince Metternich had actually succeeded in convincing him of Austria's entire unselfishness, by continually giving the assurance that she was the 'only entirely saturated State' in Germany.

I had a very difficult job with my excellent uncle, who had positively given himself up to the most gloomy feelings and worst fears of war on account of the course of French events and the ever plainer awakening of Bonapartism. I talked with him all night until dawn, and had arrived at the conviction that the suggestions of the Austrian party could be counteracted with good effect on the King from England alone. My brother therefore decided, after I had sufficiently opened his eyes during my stay in London concerning the state of things in Brussels, on addressing a very firm memorial to our uncle, which document may nowadays be without doubt regarded as one of the most valuable witnesses of the correctness of the Confederate State ideas of the year 1850.

'*Buckingham Palace, March 19th*, 1850.

'MOST GRACIOUS UNCLE—I still have your welcome letter

of the 11th to answer, and deplore, meantime, that I can in no way agree to the views expressed in the same. Our difference of opinion appears to me to be founded on the fact that you abstract Germany from the idea, as you demand a solution of the present confusion at any price, whereas I have my judgment and proposals on this idea solely, and start from the same.

'You wish Prussia to be satisfied and considered as much as possible—not so I, for I only desire Prussia to do her duty towards Germany, and to ensure to her the federative-constitutional development which is necessary for Germany, and which Prussia alone can ensure to her, because Austria is and will remain un-German and anti-German, and the small kings are being reduced by her sovereignty swindle to destroy monarchy itself in Germany and to open the doors to the Red Republic, rather than to strive honourably to form a federative constitution for Germany which would have some vitality.

'In their opposition they are necessarily thrown back on mediatising and incorporating the smaller States, whilst Prussia is forced to protect them and to make them a loyal Power and give them a position, in order to make the federative State possible. Compare, now, the Erfurt programme with the Munich Alliances, in which Baden is no longer considered as existing!! I cannot, therefore, be afraid of seeing Coburg occupied by the troops, of what you called a Foreign Great Power (Prussia), when I assume a German Confederate army, in which the Prussian troops, as well as those of the other States, and consequently Coburg's also, are incorporated.

'Saxony would also be more preferable to me than Prussia and the Duchies would fall to the Saxon corps, according to the Three Kings' Constitution; but Saxony abandons the Alliance! In her is the unity of the Saxon Houses which you desire and which I also desire, conventionally and constitutionally established, and rendered morally possible through her loyal guarantee; outside the alliance and without her protection it is not possible, and every attempt fails through the mistrust which they feel for each other: that the

one would like to obtain the advantage over the other in the political changes.

'The conduct of the Albertinian line under Moritz and always since then, is, as you rightly say, the cause of Saxony's decline. But what was this conduct, other than the giving up of Germany for France and Poland, the relinquishment of Protestantism and leaning on the Catholic anti-German policy of Austria with the relationship of the House to all Spanish and Italian bigots.

'This mistaken policy on the part of the Catholic Albertinians has destroyed the House, and given Prussia the position which Germany needed in a Protestant House as a protection against Hapsburg Jesuitic oppression.

'But Saxony is now ignorantly and incorrigibly doing nothing else than turning away from the German cause and the Northern Protestant Constitutional Alliance, and annexing herself again, in opposition to her healthy, natural position to Austria. And with history open before us—ought the Saxon Duchies to follow Saxony in her suicidal policy and join with her? I would never advise it.

'Prussia has besides taken part of Saxony and bears the Saxon arms on her shield. But she can be forced by Saxony to take the remainder, and Austria will willingly offer her help towards such a means of escaping from the danger, that is, she will willingly see Germany united and under Prussian presidentship, having even already often spoken of the possible usefulness of a division of Germany with Prussia, and will then afford Saxony the very same protection which she afforded her when Frederick Augustus went to Prague and placed himself in the hands of the Emperor Francis.

I have written a terribly long letter, and must beg pardon, but I was very anxious to speak freely of my German and *good Saxon* views.

'Farewell, ever your faithful nephew,

'ALBERT.'

As is seen, my brother by no means needed my exhortation in order to set to work for the German cause. He had

decided in favour of it with his peculiar firmness and acuteness, and the question which was principally to be treated between us consisted only in finding out what steps could be taken on his and the English side in order to work against Austrian influences at the German Courts.

Immediately before my departure from home I had had a good opportunity of looking closely into the state of things.

Prince Leiningen had stayed several days in Gotha with me, and with the intention of forcing me away from the alliance with Prussia, told me all that which, in his opinion, afforded the prospect of a sudden rotation on the part of the King of Prussia. It was a highly characteristic feature in this matter, that the organs of the Austrian Government announced with conspicuous haste that my cousin had really gained his point with me.

'The elections for Erfurt,' it was insinuated in pretended correspondences from Gotha, 'will not be hurried on in the Duchies, as the highest authorities very well know how little confidence prevails even in Berlin as regards a settlement which they shirk in Dresden, and how earnestly Austria is decided on maintaining her influence in Germany. Prince Leiningen was here a short time ago, and as he came from Vienna made remarkable disclosures in this respect.'

But if the latter was correct, nothing was nevertheless farther from either my brother or myself, than to allow ourselves to be intimidated by such kinds of missions.

I had, besides, had the most doubtful experiences only shortly before that in Weimar, where I was helping to celebrate the birthday of the Grand Duchess, on February 16th, and where the Princess of Prussia was also staying. She furnished the most interesting information concerning the increasing mutual understanding, and when the Princess, always full of the warmest patriotism and the most correct political convictions, had come to us at Gotha on the 19th on a visit, she declared she had just received very bad news.

In Vienna and Dresden all hopes were placed on the fact that the work of the Confederate State must again be destroyed by means of Parliament. They hoped that the Erfurt Diet

would refuse to alter the decisions of the Imperial Constitution on account of the Prussian Constitution of which Frederick William had taken the oath.

The idea occurred of making use of the disunion of the two parties in order to prepare the line of retreat for the King of Prussia. They thought to make the political transition of Prussia to the cause of the Frankfort States Confederacy easier by means of friendly advances.

In order to work against this plan of campaign, I arranged in London with my brother for the latter to send the following letter to the Prince of Prussia immediately after my departure from England. We composed it together, and it was not without effect in Berlin.

'Most Gracious Cousin,—Your friendly letter of the 24th inst. afforded me great pleasure, as it gave such good news of you, and we had only a short time before been seriously frightened by the accident at the Prussian Court in Frankfort. But as you do not mention it at all, we may suppose that you have felt no ill effects from it.

'The political condition of things in Germany is still highly unsatisfactory; nevertheless one can at least heartily wish Prussia good luck, at having brought her work of the Constitution to so brilliant a close, and *thus* become the first State, which has really completed the task set by the year 1848, whilst all the others are still held in the same doubt and helplessness in which the revolution threw them.

'May Prussia show an equal amount of perseverance in the second part also of her task of reconstructing Germany, and arrive at a brilliant similar result to that which she has already attained! That, the nearer the moment of the meeting of the Erfurt Assembly appears, the angrier the opposition of Austria and the Kings becomes, is quite natural, and only proves that that meeting is regarded by them as highly dangerous to their machinations, and that it is to be deplored, that the summons has been so long delayed, and so much valuable time and strength thus lost. If Prussia will *fearlessly* keep to her undertaking, nothing can prevail over her.

'Austria is undoubtedly seeking to intimidate the small States, but she has only two ways of doing this: that is, of making them afraid:—

'1. Prussia desires to take them, and

'2. Prussia will leave them in the lurch, should it come to a break, and then abandon them to the revenge of Austria and the Kings.

'To both of these accusations Prussia can give no better answer than by firmly keeping to her programme, and completing the Confederate State, even if only the small States are to be contained in it. They will then, protected and saved both outwardly and internally, cling to her all the more firmly, and Austria will lose the principal lever with which she is operating on the kingdoms, namely the occupation of the smaller States.

'I also hope that the Erfurt Assembly will therefore form a resolution similar to the proposal of Herr Liebig from Brunswick, and Prussia should (in my opinion) urge the same, namely, the acceptance of the Constitution as a whole, and the suspension of all articles in it which presuppose the agreement of other States. With this resolution the unity and peace of Germany would appear to me to be saved.

'The States which have remained in the Alliance will be able to reconstitute themselves legally under Prussia, and the kingdoms would soon recognise their want of power and helplessness to reconstitute themselves outside of the Confederacy; for although they can be a great hindrance to the establishment of the German Confederate State under Prussia, they themselves (it is my firm conviction) can form *no kind* of political body *whatever* without Prussia, and least of all, *under Austria*, and they cannot exist alone and isolated.

Prussia should therefore steadfastly proceed in the performance of her task, and allow no one to presume that she has no confidence in herself and her cause. The utterance: 'if everything abandons us, we have nevertheless saved our honour,' which I have so frequently heard from Prussia, should therefore be strictly avoided. Prussia will certainly not be deserted if she does not desert herself and Germany.

'My brother, who can unfortunately only stay a few days with us, has also told me a great deal about the fear with which they are seeking to inspire the small States, but he is also firmly persuaded that they have *nothing* to fear in an alliance with Prussia. On the other hand, one thing occasions me much anxiety, and that is the possibility that the King, from nobility of feeling, might allow the rightminded in Neufchâtel to be led into beginning a quarrel with Switzerland. This would be the most unfortunate and dangerous thing which could happen to her and to Germany at the present moment, and the thought alone has already given rise to thunder-clouds in France. The danger which he would by this means bring on all Europe cannot be calculated, whereas the possible advantage which might be gained, can hardly be of any value at all.

'I am glad that our Universal Exhibition has met with your approbation, and on the words which you let fall concerning it, we should like to build a hope of welcoming you with the Princess on the occasion. We will meanwhile consider this a settled matter.

'Victoria sends you a thousand messages, and I remain with the sincerest friendship and respect,—Your faithful cousin,

'ALBERT.

'*Windsor Castle, March* 5, 1850.'

In order to measure the extraordinary value of my brother's immediate and decided utterance of opinion in our Memoirs concerning the German question, it must be remembered that the English Government in Germany had almost exclusively diplomatic representatives who advised the Courts to make the most prejudicial efforts. They purposely spread the opinion that the Confederate State policy of Prussia had nothing but opposition to expect on the part of England.

Lord Westmoreland was at that time English *Chargé d'Affaires* in Berlin, Mr Forbes in Dresden. They were both personally well-known to me, and I often represented to them

what unjustifiable harm they were doing the German cause through their private antipathies. It was certainly characteristic of the state of things in diplomacy when my brother wrote on the 22nd of March:

'Our C . . . Forbes advises Beust to have Saxony take advantage of a war in order to snatch back her provinces from Prussia, or to otherwise increase her possessions.

'The secret has lately been finely exposed by the *Examiner*, in the words: "England keeps a dignified neutrality with the exception of our Pumpernickel Diplomatists at the small German Courts, who fear the extinction of their twaddlesome nothingness?" Forbes is excellently described here.'

Unfortunately, the presupposition that every single English petty diplomatist represented the universal opinion of the kingdom could not everywhere be dispelled.

Under these circumstances, it was of the greatest importance that, at least, in the highest circles of Berlin, the conviction should be kept awake that the Prince, as well as the Queen, thought entirely differently of the German Confederate State and the Erfurt Parliament, than was superficially given out as the English view in the ordinary motion of the diplomatic machinery.

For the same reason, my brother placed great value on Stockmar's being elected for the Erfurt Parliament. The confidant of the English House was in some measure to bear witness there to their sentiments. Although it could not be asserted that Stockmar had shown himself very active in this cause, we nevertheless took all pains in Coburg to bring about his election to the House of Representatives. He himself only arrived at Erfurt from London after the opening of Parliament, and took his seat on April 1. He maintained great reserve, however, and laid a weight here and there in the scales more through his personal authority than through any lively participation in the negotiations.

In his opinion matters were so hopeless, that after a stay in Erfurt of from only four to five days, he began to make the most evil prophecies. To my mind, such pessimism was

at least premature, and only calculated to spoil the cause all the more surely.*

The character of the Erfurt Assembly was in every respect worthy of esteem, and I am still of the same opinion to-day that I was then, that no Assembly of the kind has ever met in Europe which showed such great and statesman-like moderation.

While Germany was still divided in passionate dispute, there was more or less confidence in Prussia at Erfurt, but only a single view of the nature of the German question.

Undoubtedly decisive for the comprehension which most of the members of the Parliament brought to Erfurt, was the name of Radowitz, whom the Prussian Government had nominated Commissioner of the Diet, and whose authorisation as Plenipotentiary was taken as a proof that the King was really in earnest concerning the solution of the German question. They could not think otherwise than that a man, whose Prussian-German programme dated from the time before the year 1848, and who had therefore been doubly prized by Frederick William IV, was only chosen at this date in order to direct the now speedy execution with a sure hand.

When, at the end of February, the certainty prevailed in the Administrative Council at Berlin, that Herr von Radowitz would take the place of von Bodelschwingh, this was regarded as a favourable sign, in spite of the great confidence which the latter had enjoyed.

They did not understand, it is true, why, in case of the nomination of Herr von Radowitz to the post of Prussian Commissioner, Herr von Bodelschwingh wished to retire from the Administrative Council, but mistrust for the person and work of the active and clever General only arose a long time afterwards, and then in consequence of the Erfurt negotiations. Thus, even on the 9th of March, Seebeck only sent good news concerning the occurrences which took place in the Administrative Council.

In this question Radowitz had taken Bodelschwingh's place,

* Memoirs, p. 599: compare Stockmar's.

and at once had the satisfaction of seeing all his motions adopted, particularly his proposal to nominate Herr von Carlowitz in Dresden to the post of commissioner to the Diet.

'Thus,' concluded the reporter, 'we are near our goal, God grant that we may reach it quickly and happily at the final onset. To return the pledge entrusted to it uninjured to the nation was the task of the Administrative Council. May it now be with it as with the seed which, scattered on the soil, rots away, only to send up the fuller ear tall and strong to the light of day.'

As may be seen from these words, even very deliberate and quiet men had grown more cheerful at this time.

A few days later Ministers, administrative councillors, deputies and diplomatists of all nations were on a journey to the ancient Thuringian capital, which had seen within her walls so many Imperial and Provincial Diets, and, a generation ago, the comedy of an assembly of princes at the feet of the Corsican usurper.

Recollections of the greatness and the humiliation of Germany clung to the narrow streets of the city, dating from the Middle ages, so that President Simson could not avoid, in his opening address, giving utterance for his part, also, to this historically consecrative feeling. He recalled the fact that just a thousand years ago King Louis had also summoned the Germans to this city to a Diet for the regulation of public matters.

The Left in this Assembly consisted of men of entirely conservative opinion, most of them being members of the Frankfort Centres which had formed into a party six months before in Gotha. The Opposition sat on the right hand benches here, and numbered some of the best known partisans of Prussian particularism, who, like Gerlach, Stall, Kleist-Retzlow, revealed themselves more and more plainly as the antagonists of German unity. If it came to differences between the Government and the majority of the Diet, the reason, as is known, lay in the formal question, whether the Constitution was to be taken as a whole and the revision of

the individual decrees was to follow, or whether the Constitution rejected as a whole, but newly worked out in an amended form.

Here was therefore the insidious point, against which all the confidence which was reposed in Radowitz, was shattered; here was the battle-ground of personal antagonism, as it appeared in Bodelschwingh and Paton against the Prussian Commissioner; here the 'Blackthorn party' found a handle with which to render even the most loyal conduct of the Liberals suspect as being revolutionary and anti-Prussian.

It is far from being my intention to resume the negotiations of the Parliament in the National and State House individually, after the protocols which have been universally published. If, however, the attitude of Radowitz and the Prussian Government was at that time, and later, regarded as being somewhat enigmatical, perhaps a few communications from the reports of the occurrences in the Administrative Council may always be of interest. Radowitz had here openly sought to work on the views of the States Plenipotentiaries more according to the wish of his royal master than in full unanimity with the Prussian Ministry.

'Clearly,' so it ran, 'the Prussian Government desired, and still desires to avoid the appearance that the course and conclusion of the Confederate State development issued from their side alone. They wish that matters should be brought to them, that they should appear only to avoid a politically historical necessity.'

One will not be in error, if one immediately thinks, after reading the words, of the feeling of the King, who wished to know that the responsibility was removed from him, who wished to represent himself to Austria, particularly, as an urged, forced man, and to prove to Russia that, unless Prussia maintained peace, the revolution would flame forth with renewed strength.

When it was asserted, on the contrary, that Radowitz had altogether rejected the acceptance as a whole of the Constitution, this contradicts everything which he had said on the subject in the Administrative Council.

He only insisted upon the proviso of an immediate revision by means of simple majorities.

Regarding the acceptance of the Constitution as a whole, one difficulty was not to be mistaken, which increased from day to day, that this made it much easier for the uncertain allies to desert the Confederacy.

It was here that the fatal influence of the Electorate of Hesse, and the mischief-brewing subjects of the Electorate began.

If thunder-clouds were everywhere seen to be gathering at the nomination of Hassenpflug to the post of Minister of the Electorate of Hesse, and the appearance of this man in Erfurt and Berlin, it had nevertheless hardly become known that the Elector had come forward in person with proposals of adjournment for the King of Prussia.

They wrote to me during the Easter days from Berlin that Minister von Schleinitz had expressed himself not without anxiety on the subject.

'Most of all, it is necessary,'—so ran my news—'to make a firm formation in Erfurt quickly. In this progress Prussia will not let herself be led astray, even should the one or the other State withdraw at the carrying out of the decisions of May 26th. The Elector of Hesse has written a letter to the King of Prussia, and requested him to adjourn the diet, as other proposals were now being made, and it appeared advantageous to negotiate first concerning them. In case this did not do, however, Prussia might at least invite the Plenipotentiaries to Erfurt, also those from the States which do not belong to the Alliance.

'The King answered this personally with a refusal, and particularly pointed out how the Munich Convention, depending upon a misapprehension of the rights of the smaller States, was calculated to awaken desires to wrong them, but that he was convinced that this could not be the case considering the Elector's sense of justice.'

The antagonists of the Confederate State were at that moment striving to break up the union by working immedi-

ately on the sovereign Princes. I must emphasise this all the more here, because my own interference in the course of affairs afterwards was aimed at making the threatened desertion of the Confederate Princes impossible.

If, in Parliamentary circles, they also had the praiseworthy intention of allowing the acceptance of the Constitution to follow immediately upon its revision, it nevertheless depended first of all upon obtaining the consent of the individual Governments and Princes as quickly and surely as possible. In this respect one could entirely agree with von Radowitz's point of view, and it cannot be asserted that his anxiety and care were unfounded. What was entirely wanting, however, was an energetic and determined use of the means which might lead to the goal.

One of the worst interludes during the special negotiations concerning the Constitution had to be borne by the General, when they arrived in the Upper House at the article concerning the right of the Confederate State to make peace or war. Herr von Carlowitz had been decided on by von Radowitz as the proposer in the Upper House of measures which in this respect contained the largest concessions in favour of the wider alliance, whilst the Administrative Council insisted upon the strict establishment of the Confederate rights.

Herr von Carlowitz consequently wished to resign his position of Commissioner, and I think it was only owing to my persuasions that he refrained from so doing. I happened to be at Erfurt during this serious difference, and mediated as well as I could; but it could not be mistaken, that Radowitz had, in this matter, yielded to a secret wish of the King's, not to separate himself, in the important States' questions of peace and war, from Austria and the old Confederate relation of 1815.

In spite of these and many other secondary thoughts, which had not yet been dissolved in Berlin, I again began to hope, when it was shown since the middle of April that the House of Representatives were bent on removing all the clauses from the Constitutional Bill which contained any opposition to the Prussian Constitution. In this, the thought-

ful conduct of the representatives in the fundamental rights was decisive, for with the extinguishing of all the radical growth of the Frankfort Constitutional work from the Confederate State Bill on the 28th of May, any reasonable grounds for retiring from the union seemed to be taken from the Princes. The latter circumstance was without doubt to be regarded as the cardinal point of the united existence of the Confederate State. I therefore used all my influence on the Liberal Deputies, in order to make them understand that all questions concerning the Constitution were only a secondary matter, in comparison with the necessity of keeping a firm hold in every way on the Princes.

Through the Duchess, who was at that time at Karlsruhe, I sent my father-in-law the most binding assurances of the favourable progression of the work in the Diet, and the daily increasing confidence in the causes, and prepared him for the necessity that the Princes should meet in person while the Imperial Diet was still assembled.

I conferred with Radowitz and tried, in spite of his opposition, to render the idea of a Congress of Princes familiar to him, on the other hand, I also found an opportunity of showing the gentlemen of the Prussian reactionary opposition that their love for the old Confederate Diet of Prussia might place them in a position which might be but little suited to the traditions of the State and its place amongst European powers.

Wavering between hopes and fears, my letters to my brother in these disturbed days were a correct picture of the alternating feelings for which he, with his lively interest for the work of unity, felt the most entire sympathy. I will therefore immediately insert a portion of this correspondence:

'*Gotha, March* 26, 1850.

'DEAR ALBERT,—I enclose you two letters from Erfurt. Matters are going on very well there. The real intelligence of Germany is indisputably assembled there in extract—with the exception of Karl and Blittersdorf. The former calls the cause a bad joke!!

'If it is possible to accept the Constitution as a whole, of which there is a great deal of hope, we shall have taken a great step forward, and then Russians and Austrians can threaten as they will. The saddest of all is, that all the Princes of our Confederacy, with but few exceptions, amongst whom we Saxon Dukes reckon ourselves, only remain with the cause and act for it through constraint.

'The well-known intrigues of certain persons have now taken root in Karlsruhe and Darmstadt. Fortunately, the weal of Germany does not depend upon her Princes alone. What a part they might play had they ever understood the cause of the people and made themselves its supporters.—Yours, etc.

'ERNEST.'

'My hearty thanks,' answered my brother on the 8th of April, 'for your last two letters and their enclosures. The news is of great value to me, and I beg you to continue sending it to me for some time longer. Our Princes remind me of the Egyptian Pharaohs, who, after every plague, which had been sent upon them and Egypt, at once hardened their hearts again. Germany has unfortunately not yet found the right Moses!'

Meanwhile the interludes and quarrels mentioned above had occurred, concerning which I reported on the 15th of April:

'DEAR ALBERT— . . . I have already been to Erfurt several times, and attended the most important sessions of the Houses as well as many conferences, I will try to draw a brief sketch, but my heart bleeds as I outline it.

'Never until now, has such an assembly been experienced in Europe as the Erfurt Parliament; there is really *no* Opposition and no Left. The Opposition alone is formed by the Prussian Ministry with Herr von Radowitz. They oppose their own proposals and motions in the Houses. This is a frightful fact, which may have equally frightful consequences, unless a lucky star watches over Germany.

'They are pretending mystery with the Administrative Council, and the latter, the organ of the union, is as inconsiderately compromised as it is paralysed. The Saxon Government Commissioner, Herr von Carlowitz, came to see me particularly, yesterday, in order to explain to me as an old friend *of the same mind*, that his honour as a German and his political good name no longer allowed of his remaining in his position. After arguing for several hours, I succeeded in deciding him to wait for the transactions of the present week, before he retired. The consequences of such a step could not be calculated, as an official vote of mistrust would in this way be passed against one of the most just men in existence.

'The day before yesterday the Constitution was accepted by the House of Representatives. A few weeks ago it was the object of all hopes and wishes, now Berlin is acting against it, disavows all anticipated complaints, and the Ministers and authors of all those complaints voted against it, but nevertheless remained in their places.

'There are now only two ways, which are equally bad. The State House can reject the acceptance of the Constitution once. They are striving to bring this about, and there is a possibility of it, as the many Prussian aristocrats will go with their Ministries.

'B—— himself told me that he would make every effort with his fraction in order to prevent any establishment of the German Constitution.

'In the other case, if the State House accepts the Constitution, all that remains will be to grant another Constitution, or to dissolve Parliament. A second one will not, however, be so easily convened. All this is once more the consequence of Russo-Austrian notes. They are still hoping in Berlin for a union with the hostile party and have not the courage to follow the straight path.

'If they had begun in Erfurt with another forced Constitution its acceptance would have been *certain*.

'The course now adopted compromises them and the Parliament, and is only working towards a revolution, or yields

to the Austrians, and then there will be civil war and no Germany. Thus matters stand. Judge now for yourself. Karl was here several days, and is going to England very shortly. He is naturally laughing in his sleeve. Early to-morrow I shall go again to Erfurt with Loewenstein, who has been staying with me for a week. It is said that Stockmar is talking of returning to England soon. You must know better about that.

'Now farewell! The whole of life has no charm, as long as the die has not been cast in Erfurt—Your, etc.,

'ERNEST.

'*Gotha, April*, 15 1850.'

The same day in which I wrote this letter, the consultations concerning the individual proposals for alterations had begun in Erfurt, which changes had been made by the constitutional committee and the different representatives for the bill of May 28th.

In consequence of this, the Prussian statesmen, and most of all Radowitz himself, had begun to feel uneasy concerning the defeat of the acceptance as a whole. I was, as has been seen from the foregoing letters, on tolerably intimate terms with men of all shades of opinion. Many men of the so-called railway-station party had often come to Gotha to see me. During those days I established effective relations with Vincke, Auerswald and particularly with Radowitz, but the Ultra-Conservatives also, particularly Gerlach, had not seemed to dispute my views, very different from theirs, with me. Quite amusing scenes often took place, when they referred me to the articles in the *Kreuzzeitung*, which Gerlach himself had not seldom caused to be written, in order to draw my attention to the fact that certain Princes in Germany were still in league with the revolution.

'Several of the Thuringian Princes,' as it always ran in the plural, amongst whom, however, only I could be meant, were, on account of their suspiciously radical sentiments, very hardly and angrily attacked by the paper, although only by means of insinuations, and it was beginning to obtain an

amount of influence which might hardly have been imagined possible.

When the news of the acceptance of the Constitution arrived in Berlin, the *Kreuzzeitung* and the *German Reform*, the latter and Government organ, issued furious articles against the entire Confederate State party.

The *Reform* threatened the 'doctrinarily dazzled' members of the House that Prussia would not for a moment endure the appearance of force from them, and the *Kruzzeitung* inquired 'whether the Prussian eagle was to be shut up in the cage of Gotha, so that Germany might become great and mighty under his wings.'

Such, and similar, utterances in newspapers which otherwise had influence with the most decisive circles, could not but be regarded as the forerunners of a complete break between Berlin and Erfurt; the astonishment of all parties was therefore all the greater when, as in a sudden change of weather, all clouds appear to have dissolved between the 13th and 15th of April in Prussian Government circles, and the consultations in both Houses were continued under the friendliest co-operation of Count Brandenburg and Minister Manteuffel. Radowitz, concerning whom Seebeck informed me on the 13th that he had fallen into the deepest depression, greatly chagrined by the overpowering majority for the acceptance of the Constitution as a whole, interested himself since the 15th in the liveliest manner in the revision, and although single differences of opinion had occurred between him and the Prussian Ministers at the voting, Seebeck was, nevertheless able to make the pleasant communication on April 15th, 'The Ministers appeared to be very well satisfied with the course of affairs.'

Occurrences of this kind have made it well nigh doubtless what a high degree of purely personal determination was exclusively determinate in these vital questions of Germany. What special reasons the King had suddenly to come forward so warmly for the Union, it has not been possible for me to discover, but that he showed himself firmly, almost enthusiastically inclined for the good cause in the second half of

the month of April, I was able to see immediately and personally, as will at once be shown.

As regarded the Erfurt negotiations, they furnished during more than a fortnight a picture of the fullest concord. After the State House had begun to follow the same course of decision, as the House of Representatives, and had also begun the work of revision, there remained only a few points of difference, which were to be levelled by the association of the constitutional exclusions of both Houses. With regard to this, Seebeck reported on April 20:

'I think I may suppose that the House of Representatives will respond to the otherwise so ready adoption of the Constitution on the part of the Upper House, and will further accept their anomalous decisions. The definite final event of the revision will probably be obtained during the first days of the coming week, and the chief work of the Parliament brought to a close. That the Governments may well be satisfied with the work of the Parliament and their whole behaviour appears to me to be beyond doubt. It has probably seldom happened that an Assembly convened for co-operative constitution has known, in face of the want of any adequate leadership on the part of the Governments, how to discover and hold to what was proper to the times and circumstances with so much reflection, moderation and circumspection. One may therefore give room to the hope that all the allied Governments will recognise this with satisfaction, and willingly decide on assuring the happily non-result for themselves and for the nation.

'Should this not be the case, one might hardly hope that a similar Parliament will assemble with the same amount of goodwill and perform the task assigned to it.

'Herr von Radowitz started to-day for Berlin, but will return the day after to-morrow, and then proposes at once to inform the Administrative Council in what way his Government regards the further treatment of the Constitutional question as desirable. On this occasion the question of the formation of a new organ for the whole of the German Allied States will probably come under discussion, as neither Prussia

nor Austria has the intention to increase the duration of the interim beyond May 1st.'

In the latter respect, the most serious rumours had already been spread at Erfurt, concerning Austria's intentions shortly to invite the German Allied States to conferences at Frankfort.

The deceptive name could furnish the uncertain members of the Union with fresh grounds for desertion, and it was therefore of the greatest importance that the Confederate State work should be brought to a rapid close.

Starting from this point of view, all the work of both Houses of Parliament had been completed by the 28th of April, the question now was, should it be dissolved, adjourned or remain as it is, until the acceptance of the parliamentary decrees on the part of the Governments was ensured.

When Herr von Radowitz returned from Berlin on the 22nd of April, they thought to have reasons for receiving pleasant news from him. Anxiety was aroused only by the Austrian efforts to allow the Confederate commission in Frankfort to be replaced by an enlarged Congress of Plenipotentiaries, which would greatly resemble the old Confederate Diet.

'Yesterday,'— continues Seebeck in his report,—'diplomatic notes were confidentially communicated to me, which announce great activity on the part of the Austrian Cabinet, the united Governments, and especially Prussia also in bringing about an understanding concerning the proposal made. *Divide et impera* is the principle according to which Austria seems to be acting here also. It was of interest to me, to find in one of the notes the assurance that the Austrian Government was by no means of the opinion that the Munich proposals of February 27th could serve for the rebuilding of the German Constitution. This was a pretty open confession that those proposals were only intended to immediately disturb the establishment of the Union. The same thing may be the chief aim of the new proposal.'

The dangers just pointed out with so much justice should have decided the Administrative Council upon preventing the

dissolution of Parliament by every means in their power. Only Radowitz knew how to obtain by a number of the most superficial reasons, that decisions should be made concerning this point as early as April 23rd, which, on account of their subtlety, could not but pass for great failures at such decisive moments. They wished to break up the Parliament, 'but to mark the close as the end of a period of session, and to notice at the same time that the beginning of the next one would be announced according as circumstances should require.'

During the same session Herr von Radowitz explained, 'that he could already give assurance of the approval of his Government of all the proposals for amelioration made by Parliament.' Further, that Prussia would, in consequence of the Austrian proposals, only act in accord with all the other Confederate allies; but all these good intentions might be esentially injured by the opposition to be expected from some of the Confederate State Governments.

In the message itself which Radowitz had read aloud in the name of the Administrative Council in the House of Representatives, and Carlowitz in the Senate House of Lords, the question of another meeting of Parliament had been left entirely undecided.

It was only said that the re-summoning was reserved and *this* session of Parliament was declared to be closed.

That, nevertheless, a powerful instrument for the progress of the cause had been given up, in no way appeared evident to the members of the Administrative Council, and particularly to Herr von Radowitz. Seebeck asserted:

'The form of the close was altogether dignified and, according to all appearances, made on the whole a very favourable impression on the representatives, as did the adjournment without the fixing of a terminus.

'There were, however, several members in both Houses who considered it a mistake on the part of the Administrative Council to have followed Herr von Radowitz in this path.

'Eventually, the message had to be kept impersonal and colourless as an utterance of the Administrative Council's in the name, as it were, of all the Confederate Governments, and

was therefore little calculated to produce a deep impression on the members of both Houses, or to animate or enliven the nation to a great degree. It was difficult to stand against the many hostile voices and newspapers from South Germany, when they spread the opinion that Parliament had broken up in a dull, joyless and hopeless manner.

'After the close of the Diet, Herr von Radowitz, who was about to set out at once for Berlin, held another short session of the Administrative Council.

'During it, they decided at once to send the Parliamentary decrees handed in by the presidents of both Houses to the allied Governments, and to request the latter to send them information as soon as possible, through the proper plenipotentiaries concerning their decision in these cases. The next session will again take place in Berlin, probably not before the 10th of May.

'Herr von Radowitz hopes that by then the Plenipotentiaries will be in a position to lay the declarations of their Governments before the Administrative Council. As the German matter will now be decided in every essential respect in Berlin, I shall take care to go thither as soon as possible, and hope to be able to reach there by May 2nd.'

In these words Seebeck informed me of the intentions of the Administrative Council at a moment when the preparations for an immediate meeting of the Princes themselves had been made, and the invitations to a Congress had been issued by the King of Prussia, which, at the non-participating Courts of Germany, made the deepest impression, I may even say, produced a feeling of heavy defeat. This Congress of Princes had its history, which has hitherto hardly anywhere been correctly and truthfully related.

The thought of overcoming the difficulties attendant on German unity by means of the summoning of a Congress of Princes arose in the midst of the transactions of the Diet, and I must beg the reader to follow me once more into the Church of St Augustine at Erfurt, in order to make it possible for him fully to understand one of the most remarkable events of

those days. One of the most important sessions of the Parliament was that of April 12th. The transactions had this day taken a rapid and exciting course, and at the very beginning, from fifty to sixty speakers had announced their intention of speaking.

The reporter of the Constitutional Committee was Herr von Camphausen, whose task was no light one, he having to make the most diverse views plain concerning which the report of the acceptances and revision of the Constitution had to furnish an account.

President Simson divided all proposals into two groups: those which previously demanded the unaltered acceptance of the proposition of March 20th, also under which modalities, and those which wished to let all other voting in the revision precede. The list of speakers was drawn up according to these two points of view, and Camphausen took the floor first.

I appeared at Erfurt early in the morning of this day, and when I entered the Church of St Augustine, a lively scene presented itself to my view on every side, such as I had not witnessed since the fateful days of the debate concerning the armistice in St Paul's Church. They discussed the question of the day, which, under ordinary circumstances, would only have been regarded as one of form, with an amount of zeal and passion which might certainly be explained as arising from a too great want of confidence in the Governments.

Even Herr von Radowitz was carried away by the universal uneasiness and spent no happy day. When his turn came to speak, his utterances were uncertain and unimportant, and several members on the extreme Right did him the harm of applauding, whilst the Left remained silent. He had challenged the House, even urgently warned it, to make an immediate revision of the Constitution, and to reject it as a whole. Under these circumstances it was allowed Herr von Manteuffel to celebrate a rare triumph, when he came forward warmly and enthusiastically in support of the idea of a Confederate State. He also declared himself in favour of the rejection of the Constitution as a whole, and particularly opposed the view that a fresh opportunity would then be

furnished the Princes to retire from the alliance. He made use of the simile, that those fish which were strong enough to do so, would still tear the net, even if it had been closed by means of the Constitution.

It nevertheless produced the greatest effect when Manteuffel, after having earnestly refrained from speaking in this place as a Prussian Minister, let fall, with a sharp allusion to Bavaria and her allies, the bold expression of the 'miscarriage of a constitution,' which had been 'brought to light elsewhere and to which consent would never be given.'

Immediately after the close of Manteuffel's speech, I conversed with a number of persons of note, and declared my certain conviction that it must be the task of a healthy policy to keep the fish in the net. But no one knew any means which would make it possible, and hardly anything practical for the solution of the question was suggested from any rostrum. Keller and Stalle spoke in the same strain as Manteuffel and Radowitz. Finally, Bincke rose, and appeared to have weakened all timid arguments with his happy flow of words, but his hopes were really set on the efficacy of the Supreme Court of the Empire, to which he promised the most extraordinary success. It must judge the renegade Confederate Princes and hold the wavering ones firm by the power of the oath of fidelity to the Empire.

I admit that I did not with equal certainty expect any influence from this direction on those persons who were looked to most of all to maintain the alliance. I thought that more powerful means must be found in order to ensure the sympathy of the Princes for the cause. I feared that the opposing parties in the Confederate States themselves would furnish the Princes with a pretext for declaring the whole reorganisation of the Confederacy impracticable.

After the session was closed at three o'clock, I went with Radowitz to his house, and had a long conversation with him, during which he finally agreed with me, in spite of the opposition he showed at first, and promised to take the matter in hand at once, according to my view.

I explained to him my reflections upon the acceptance of

the Constitution on the part of the Princes, quite indifferently, as to whether the revision was to ensue before or afterwards. The decisive point was, that after the breaking up of Parliament the work left behind by it would simply be buried. In a flood of objections, or half consent, the Confederate Governments would mutually tire each other, and the circumstance that after the dissolution of Parliament, further Alliances were shut out of themselves, would prevent any definite Constitution of the Union. The Princes would thus fall away one after the other, and the King could only make his peace with the hostile party.

If the Prussian Ministry and Radowitz himself considered the King uncertain, because the transactions at Erfurt did not go exactly according to the order traced out in Berlin, it might be asked what Frederick William would do, if Austria and Russia worked still more strongly upon him. And that a principal attack upon the King's policy was being prepared on the Austrian side to take place very speedily, was known to me through Prince Leiningen.

Under these circumstances I thought to see the deliverance of the Union in a Congress of Princes alone, which the King had summoned, and in which all the Members of the Confederacy were to take part personally.

Whilst the Erfurt Parliament was declared permanent, the Princes were to bind themselves personally to accept the Constitution, and the alterations still desired by them could at once be joined to Parliament.

Radowitz could oppose no argument to the logic of my proposals, and declared himself ready to carry them himself to his Sovereign and King, and to answer for their acceptance. I made the proposal, that the Congress should meet at Gotha, where the proximity of the Parliament made the speediest transaction of business possible; I declared myself ready to take charge of the invitations to the allied Princes, I allowed myself to submit to the King the request that he should make use of the Friedenstein at Gotha as if it were his own property, and to complete the work of German unity in the old

Saxon Castle whose name had always so pleased the King and which was so prophetical of happiness.

The more we busied ourselves in this plan, the more warmly Radowitz became inclined to it; he himself quickly put it on paper, and started the same night to lay my proposals before his royal master.

Before evening a number of prominent persons had confidentially been made acquainted with the matter, which met with much approval from all.

I did not think it right, moreover, to conceal from closer friends, that the summoning of the Congress to Gotha would be much more pleasant to many of the Princes than if they were commanded to Berlin, whilst it was at the same time of the greatest interest to the cause that the King should be removed from surroundings which might affect him unfavourably.

A double advantage would therefore be gained if the King agreed to the plan of holding the Assembly of Princes at Gotha.

And, indeed, incredible as it may sound, the great news had already been spread in a few days, that the King had fully adopted my idea of the Congress of Princes. He really wished to hold the Assembly at Gotha, and, in his enthusiastic way, he had said that he would come to plant the King's banner on the Friedenstein. On the 20th of April I was able to report to my brother the following remarkable fact:

'Dear Albert,—When I was last present at Erfurt I succeeded in pushing my views with the notabilities of the Houses as well as the Administrative Council and the Ministers, by means of which the state of affairs was to be considerably amended and an end put to the ceaseless wavering.

'I proposed, namely, to summon a congress of the Princes of the Union immediately, and to enable them to adopt, and at the same time carry out, the newly revised Constitution. You will perceive the importance of the matter and approve of it. The King of Prussia has, to the astonishment of all,

taken up the idea with warmth, and will appear here in person. The day is as yet undecided. I shall hasten to-day to Karlsruhe and Darmstadt, to spend two days, during which I shall invite the sovereigns to be present. Once they are all together, it will not be difficult for me to arrive at a firm decision. We must at least know who will remain true.

'Radowitz appeared at first to go into the plan very unwillingly. He fears that the secret play will finally cease and with it his whole mastery. Now farewell, your faithful brother,

'ERNEST.

'*Gotha, April 20th*, 1850.'

My brother was, as I correctly surmised, completely satisfied with the plan of a Congress of Princes and answered:

'I am wonderfully pleased with your plan of the Gotha reunion. May God reward you for the pains which you are taking for the German cause. The plan is excellent, for it forces a personal sealing of the alliance contracted, through notes, remissions, contracts, debates, etc. If Saxony could only be persuaded to take part! It is really pure personal blindness which restrains the Court.'

When these words were written in England the situation in Germany had meantime essentially altered, and there was nothing more illustrative of the political condition than the fact that the decisions made in Berlin had already been partly abandoned, before letters could be exchanged between London and Gotha.

At that time the most manifold conjectures were made concerning the rapid alteration on the part of the King as regarded the Gotha project. Some have said that it was found improper that the King of Prussia should receive Princes as his guests at a Congress in the residence of a petty sovereign.

These measures furnished the enemies of Prussia with sufficient material for fresh malignant deductions. Others, again, pretended that the name of Gotha, had caused a feeling of depression in Berlin on account of the after-parliament of

the Frankfort Centre which had taken place here during the preceding year. The simplest explanation was without doubt that the circle, which, as already remarked, they wished to separate from the King at Gotha, for that very reason insisted on holding the assembly, now become unavoidable, in Berlin.

Meanwhile, my Minister von Seebeck had gone to Berlin on April 29, with my letter of invitation to the King. It ran as follows :

'Your Majesty has, in reply to my wish made known to you through Lieutenant-General von Radowitz, that the reigning sovereigns of the States belonging to the Alliance of May 26, of this year, should assemble in person, at the same time assisted by responsible Ministers, without the least delay in my residence of Gotha, to hold a general council concerning the German affair of the Constitution, intimated your consent and thereby won my thanks as well as those of all who faithfully adhere to Your Majesty and the intended alliance.

'After having, in consequence of this, entrusted my States Minister von Seebeck, the bearer of this, to convey to Your Majesty the expression of my hearty thanks, I allow myself at the same time to make you the most obedient request that you will, through him, name the day on which I may expect the arrival of Your Majesty, but that you will allow the invitation to participate in the Congress, and to arrive at the same time as Your Most Gracious Majesty, to be sent to the other members of the closer alliance under Your Majesty's protection, whom I shall also receive with pleasure as my guests.

'I also allow myself to add the most respectful request that Your Majesty will give my above-mentioned States Minister von Seebeck your most gracious hearing, and fully believe him concerning all which he may tell Your Majesty in my name, particularly when he has the honour of giving Your Majesty the assurance of the high respect and unalterable devotion with which I have the honour to remain Your Majesty's,' etc.

My Minister was received by the King at Castle Relbone

on May 1st, and performed his commissions to the former's entire satisfaction. Frederick William was friendly and talkative, and commissioned him in the warmest manner to bear his thanks to me. Herr von Seebeck also thought from the King's utterances that he might assume that Gotha would continue to be kept in view as the seat of the Congress.

On the next day Seebeck repaired to the Minister for Foreign Affairs Herr von Schleinitz. While he was waiting in the ante-room, General von Radowitz appeared, entering the Minister's business room without being announced, and was therefore doubtless expected by him.

When he was gone, Seebeck was at once received, and Herr von Schleinitz expressed himself concerning the situation in a way which made it clear that he appeared but little edified by the whole Congress idea. But the most important thing was, that he explained that the King could not in the immediate future, possibly be in a position to leave Berlin. If the Congress was to be of any use whatever, it would have to be summoned at once, and could therefore not take place anywhere but in Berlin.

The chief reason assigned for this important change in the decision of the King was the impending marriage of his niece, the Princess Charlotte with the Hereditary Prince of Meiningen. But no one credited this motive, and Herr von Seebeck at once received the impression that the wedding only served as a desirable pretext for having to assemble the Princes at the Court of the King himself.

Consideration for other countries might have been the greatest incentive to the Ministry for avoiding the Gotha Congress; for the meeting of the Princes assumed a less doubtful character when viewed in connection with Prussian family events; the high political importance of the Congress would appear to be lessened in the eyes of the neighbouring States, and, with goodwill, Russian and Austrian politicians could regard the whole affair as a family celebration between related princely Houses.

The Prussian Government hastily sent out their invitations to the Confederate Princes to attend an Assembly in Berlin

immediately before the celebration of the wedding, which was fixed for the 16th of May. The King wrote me an autograph letter, which Herr von Seebeck brought me.

'*Bellevue, May 1st*, 1850.

'My Dearest Duke,—Whilst the official answer to Your Highness's letter of the 29th of last month is being drawn up at the Chancellor's office, I am sending Herr von Seebeck back to you with this confidential reply. You know through General von Radowitz how gladly I accepted your kind invitation to the Congress of Princes at Gotha. But circumstances have intervened, which make the union of the Princes —if such be in any way possible—necessary *at once*, and here. I will tell Your Highness in the deepest confidence, that Austria is threatening us with war, and that openly. It appears unavoidable that the allied Princes should make the highly important decisions which the moment demands, with a certain amount of solemnity, that is, in a personal gathering, that they should show me the way and the speech which I am to follow with regard to the South German monarchs and the foreign Great Powers, in their name. I therefore invite Your Highness to Berlin, and, if possible, for the 8th of this month of May. I hope and wish, that the further conferences concerning the consequences of the Erfurt Diet will take place later at Gotha.

'I also make use of this opportunity to beg Your Highness to accept from me the VII regiment of Cuirassiers (late that of the Grand-Duke Michael), to wear his uniform and to allow me to have your name entered in the list as the Commander of the VII regiment of Cuirassiers.

'I lay myself at the feet of Her Highness the Duchess, and beg to be recalled to her kind remembrance.

'Recommending myself again heartily to your friendship, I am Your Highness's devoted cousin,

'Frederick William.'

I answered on the 2nd of May :

'Most Gracious King,—Your Majesty's kind letter of the 1st inst. reached me this morning, and I hasten to express to Your Majesty my heart-felt thanks for the same.

'If, with bleeding heart, I see the splendid edifice fall into ruins, which I had in imagination built with the gracious consent of Your Majesty, nevertheless, I will not abandon the hope that Your Majesty will succeed, in confederation with the Princes, who have sufficient insight and the necessary patriotism, to recognise the success of the Confederate State as the sole deliverance for the universal fatherland, as well as for themselves, in order courageously to follow up the line of conduct in Berlin, which Your Majesty cannot abandon on account of all Germany, as well as your own people.

'May Your Majesty preserve your strength against the oft repeated threats of a Power hostile to the progress as well as the development of German nationality, which strength is supported in the eyes of the courageous by the fact that Your Majesty has offered your hand to the *good* cause from pure, noble motives, that this good cause will be supported on the one hand by an unconquerable army, like that of Your Majesty, on the other by faithful allies, who, in union with the majority of the German nation will gladly make every sacrifice, if they see Your Majesty quickly proceeding in the path already entered, that of honour and right.

'The Almighty has never yet deserted the good and just cause, may we depend upon Him and not become faithless to it.

'Your Majesty has, by the kind conferring of the possession of the VII Cuirassier regiment contained in the close of your gracious letter, caused me to feel an amount of pleasure which can only be experienced by a young man, who is enthusiastically devoted to the military profession. I shall try to prove my gratitude to Your Majesty by means of deeds.

'In accordance with your most gracious command, I shall have the honour soon to report myself to Your Majesty, and should like to express a wish that all Princes, to whom Your Majesty's invitation is sent, may lay so true a feeling and so

faithful a heart at the feet of Your Majesty as that which beats in my breast. Your Majesty's, etc.

'*Gotha*, *May* 2, 1850.'

As may be seen, I had no reason for personal complaint concerning the course of events, I might regard the appointment of commander of the Seventh regiment of Cuirassiers as an attention all the greater as it was formed in the year 1815 from a part of the Saxon mounted regiment of Guards, to which I at first belonged when I entered the military service in Dresden.

I was also particularly informed that apartments in the Royal Castle would be ready for me on my arrival in Berlin. It may appear almost ungrateful, yet it remained the bitter truth, when I wrote to my brother on the 3rd of May: 'One could weep tears of blood if, in spite of all efforts, Prussia cannot be kept in the straight path. What will be the next consequences?'

The official communication from the Prussian Government had meanwhile arrived, and furnished more accurate intelligence concerning the goal which was being aimed at, and the supposed reasons which decided the summoning of the Congress to Berlin:

'Illustrious Prince, Dear Friendly Cousin,—At the present important and serious moment, when the result of the consultations of the Erfurt Union Parliament lies before the allied Governments for decision and, at the same time, universal German affairs have reached a significant turning point, I feel the lively necessity of personally discussing the line to be adopted with my high allies, that the work undertaken in the common interest may also be brought to life by Us in full and free co-operation.

'Your Highness has met this want in the most agreeable way, by expressing to me the wish that the reigning sovereigns of the States belonging to the Confederacy of May 26, should, within the shortest possible time, assemble in a common Council in person, though with the assistance of

responsible Ministers, and in the most friendly manner offered your own residence of Gotha for this meeting. I can therefore only assure Your Highness with pleasure of my readiness to agree to this proposal.

'Such a meeting must be all the more desirable to me, as the subjects of this consultation concerns the most important and significant questions, in which the personal position of every Prince is concerned as much as the interests of his country. It would treat of:

'The decision concerning the adoption of the improvements of the Constitution of the Union, as they have been proposed by the Parliament at Erfurt, as well as an accurate examination of the revised Constitution, in order to consider whether an urgent need would perhaps recommend further improvements to the allied Governments; the ascertainment of those points of the Constitution which must be left until the final regulating of universal German relations; finally a temporary Alliance concerning the arrangement of a simple unionist organ.

'Meanwhile, however, German affairs have entered a stage which must lay claim to the most serious attention of all German Governments, and renders a hasty decision doubly urgently necessary. The interim settled by common consent has expired, and His Majesty, the Emperor of Austria, has invited the Governments to assemble in the person of Plenipotentiaries, in Frankfort on the Main, in order to decide the arrangement of a new interim, and at the same time to consult concerning the definite regulation of universal German constitutional matters.

'In both respects, it is my desire and intention to act in entire unity with my allies.

'It will be urgently necessary to bring about a universal understanding and a firm decision concerning the position which the States of the Confederacy of May 26th will occupy *vis-à-vis* of the interim, as well as the definite constitution of the wider Confederacy. This will also be most surely and quickly attained by means of a personal and confidential consultation between the Princes. The higher the duties are

which are incumbent on Us at this moment, the more desirable it is that we should personally agree concerning them, as We wish to fulfil them with all the emphasis of united action. The common interests, the equal feeling of most lively sympathy in the fate of the universal Fatherland, and the pleasant and hearty confidence which reigns amongst us all, will lead such a meeting to one of the goals on which the wishes of all of us are centred, and the German nation will find in this personal union of the allied Princes a pleasing relief and the surest guaranty for Our earnest desire to execute a work begun in common, during a hard time, for the healing in a manner worthy of us, of the lands entrusted to us by God.

'Your Highness will share my view that this conference should not be postponed.

'As it would now be impossible for me to leave Berlin before the 15th of this month on account of the above-mentioned joyful event of the marriage of my niece the Princess Charlotte's Royal Highness, so I hope, that Your Highness will accept it in a friendly manner, when I herewith invite Your Highness as well as the other allied Princes, to come yourselves to Berlin, in order to confer with me and Our allies concerning the questions now lying before us.

'As time presses, I beg Your Highness to give me the pleasure of your visit by the 8th of this month, at the latest, in company with a responsible Minister.

'It will meanwhile not remain closed to us if we can come together later at Gotha, to consult concerning further questions.

'As Your Highness is certainly convinced, with me, of the urgent necessity of arriving at an understanding speedily and without delay, I may hope that your Highness will meet my request cordially and willingly, and I cannot doubt that this mutual consultation between German Princes, will lead with God's help, to a happy close which will ensure the welfare and the peaceful development of Germany.

'I remain with honest esteem and friendship—Your Highness's Friendly Cousin,

'FREDERICK WILLIAM.
(Signed) 'SCHLEINITZ.

'*Charlottenburg, May 1st*, 1850.'

The official letter was not calculated to appease the fears which I had personally announced to the King. The consideration given to the complication in Frankfort of the further Confederate question, seemed to be especially disturbing, and added to all this I had received news that the Foreign Powers were in every way opposing the establishment of a closed union.

I should go to Berlin with all the less hope, as the English legation also had joined themselves to the enemies of the work of union, and with wrongly applied zeal spread the opinion everywhere that Lord Palmerston had allowed himself to be declared very decidedly against Prussia's intentions to form a closer union. I therefore urgently begged my brother for help:

'I have just received the enclosed letter, from which you will amply see how matters stand at this moment. Is it possible that you too will not leave us in peace, and Palmerston really inclines towards the other side? It would be terrible, for then I could not urge them on in Berlin. Write to me at once at Berlin through a courier, and send instructions to Westmoreland. The . . . . man is doing a frightful amount of harm to the German cause. . . .

'. . . . I leave to-morrow night, and shall reach Berlin early on Tuesday the 7th. Stockmar encourages me not to grow weary as a fore champion. He promised me to come to Berlin himself.

'I am firmly decided on using my last strength, but have but little hope.

'That the Congress was not brought about here has made a frightful impression on the public. They have no confidence in the cause in Berlin, and I am stormed on all sides. The great trust which is reposed in me affords me, it is true, a great deal of pleasure, but I fear to find so many indirect difficulties in Berlin, that I look forward to the time there with apprehension. May heaven help us, but men are too incapable.

'I embrace you. . . .—Your faithful brother,

'ERNEST.

'*Gotha, May 5th*, 1850.'

It can easily be seen from my brother's answer how urgently necessary his sympathy was to me, in order to keep the King in good progress.

'Dear Ernest,—These lines will find you in Berlin. My preceding letters must already be in your hands. Yours of the 5th has just reached me. Your letter to the King does honour to your heart and head, and raises me somewhat from the shame and indignation caused by most of the German sovereigns. I wrote yesterday to the King and the Prince of Prussia in the same tenour as you have done. How could they throw away, at the most important moment, the principal support of the Confederacy, *i.e.*, adjourn the Erfurt Parliament. If they wish to avoid war, they must fight with public opinion in the Confederacy. The patriotism of the Erfurters would have held the Princes firm and forced respect from Europe.

'They must try to correct the mistakes as quickly as possible. If the Hessens also fall off, and even others besides, the small ones must nevertheless try to save the closer Confederacy. Austria has insinuated that she is quite prepared to make them over to Prussia as an increase of territory, if only German unity were given up. You will naturally not consent to this, and make the King of Prussia promise you solemnly that you will keep the form of a closer German Confederacy (not Prussian). The kernel will then *still* be saved, in order, at the next catastrophe, which cannot fail to occur, to build up a German Confederate State.

'A speedy break is pending in France. Austria's proposals in Frankfort will be stupid nonsense, and only stupidity can arise from them; yet Germany must be saved from the social republic, and this can only be done by keeping the form of vacua alive, so that, when the next necessity arrives, the same helplessness will not overcome *those* who are now so insolently banishing all experience from their minds.—Always your faithful brother,

'Albert.

'*Buckingham Palace, May 8th*, 1850.'

Meanwhile the great week in Berlin had already begun, when I came into possession of my brother's letter. Already during the 7th of May a portion of the Confederate Princes had arrived at Berlin with me. On the 8th they were all there, with the exception of the Duke of Nassau. The Elector of Hesse had brought full power to act for the Grand Duke of Darmstadt. The governors of the free towns joined themselves to the Princes, and took full part afterwards in the conferences.

When I went to Charlottenburg, after my arrival, to present myself to the King, I had an unexpected meeting with Prince John of Saxony. He had just left the King, when I ascended the staircase of the castle in the uniform of the chief of the Seventh regiment of Cuirassiers. When I welcomed him with hearty respect, he stood as if turned to stone at the sight of me, and his answer to my greeting was as cold as if out of the deepest abyss which can possibly separate two men.

There was no doubt that they were greatly depressed at the royal Saxon Court, because of the meeting of the Princes. As, however, the invitations to the Congress were sent by the Prussian Government to all the participants in the alliance of May 26th, whether they held to it or not, the King of Saxony had still considered it necessary to excuse and explain his absence through Prince John.

My audience with Frederick William thus took place immediately after the impression made by the Saxon explanations. The King received me with great friendliness and many words of thanks for the help which I had given to the Congress; but when I attempted to turn the conversation more towards Saxon matters, I was very much surprised to notice that the King, contrary to his wont, became very laconic.

His open pleasure at seeing so many Princes assembled was like a fanciful outbreak of his personal feelings, but when he came to mention the practical tasks of the Congress he expressed himself without certainty.

He considered it least of all possible that the Congress could make binding decisions. At the best, he said, a universal

system of action would be formed with regard to the Austrian propositions. This was the most important, as well as the most practical thing. He could not become enthusiastic over the Constitution of the Union, and asserted that the Princes also would rather leave this matter to the Ministers. I tried to convince the King that it would be of great importance if the Princes could find an opportunity to express themselves personally concerning the revision so happily made at Erfurt, and the definite constituting of the Union might then be expected at the reassembling of Parliament. Upon this the King remarked that he entirely agreed to such an aim, but he did not think that the Princes would be prepared for it; should I meantime succeed in bringing them to transactions of the kind, I might be certain of his support.

Immediately upon this I spoke with the Ministers, Count Brandenburg and Herr von Schleinitz, who appeared to me to be more trustworthy than the King. Radowitz, most of all, who had been appointed commissioner at the conferences of the Ministers, showed himself full of good courage and cheerful hopes.

In spite of a heavy loss by death in his family, which he had suffered a few days before, he kept to business with great self-sacrifice, and sought to make the Ministerial conferences as fruitful as possible.

Meanwhile, Radowitz had one thing in common with his Sovereign and King, that he was ruled by the mood of the present, and entirely untrustworthy in the course of affairs.

Both immediately and animatedly began to express extravagant hopes and paralysing fears that the pendulum, wavering first on this side, then on that, would not immediately be set going regularly. If it moved to the right with the King, it swerved to the left with Radowitz, and if the former came to a firm conclusion to-day, the latter had done so yesterday, or would do so on the day following.

Meantime I had succeeded in winning over the Princes immediately on their arrival, to give the negotiations an entirely parliamentary form, to personally discuss the work of the Constitution, go through it paragraph by paragraph,

and vote on it. I had already made this thought familiar to every single one of the princely sovereigns on my visit of greeting, and met with the greatest readiness from most of them. No one would be behind the others, and what was particularly gratifying was that the elder preceded the younger ones with youthful zeal. Only the Elector of Hesse set himself at first in opposition to our motion, and tried to foil our intentions.

It happened of itself, as it were, that my dwelling was chosen as the place of meeting, and the wish was expressed on many sides, that I should undertake to preside and lead the debates. On the 8th of May, in the evening, at my invitation, the Grand-Dukes of Oldenburg, Mecklenburg, Baden, the Dukes of Brunswick, Altenburg and Dessau, assembled at my rooms for a preliminary consultation; my Minister, von Seebeck was also present at first, in order to formulate the questions, concerning which the Princes first wished to come to an agreement.

When the consultation had already begun, the Elector of Hesse was announced. As it was nevertheless known that his intentions were entirely different from those of the assembled Princes, they were at first of the opinion that I should send an excuse. The Grand-Duke of Oldenburg, however, said that 'it would nevertheless be better for him to come, and for us to ask him to take part in the deliberations, in this way we shall hear what he really wants.' As they decided on admitting the Elector to the consultation, it was my task to make him acquainted with its aim, and to beg that he would take part in it. He expressed his readiness to do so, but it was soon shown that he had only appeared at the Congress in order to prevent a union of any kind whatsoever. This hostile intention was at once plainly expressed by the Elector, and the debate therefore became very excited. When he soon saw himself driven into a corner with his weak arguments, he continually repeated that he would have to call his Minister: 'You have,' turning furiously to me, 'your Minister here, let me send for my Hassenpflug.' This gave rise to increased bitterness amongst the other Princes, and the Duke of

Brunswick became so excited that he hurled the heaviest reproaches into the Elector's face on account of his whole regimen: 'You have already almost been chased from the country, you wished to extend the same fate to all German Princes.'

The scene became so passionate that Herr von Seebeck thought proper to retire from the quarrel of the Princes. I had trouble in keeping the debate so far within bounds that the proposals could be put to the vote.

Two opinions had become prevalent amongst those present. One was that the Union must at once be established, under the investiture of a Unionist Government. The other wished to have the investiture of a Unionist Government untouched for the present, but to have the Constitution of the Union provisorily adopted, reserving farther modifications. The Elector of Hesse remained solitary with a third opinion that the adoption of the whole Constitution of the Union should be refused until the settlement of the relations to the remaining German States. In this way nearly all the Princes nevertheless agreed, that the Bill for the Constitution brought forward by the Erfurt Parliament should be placed under consideration. The transactions of the Princes should be carried on side by side with those of the Ministers, during the following days, and take place at my dwelling.

The Ministers of most of the States had also assembled for a preliminary consultation on the 8th of May, and decided to bring the Union to a definite conclusion by adopting the Constitution accepted by the Erfurt Imperial Diet, with the proposed modifications, reserving a further revision, to invest a Unionist Government and give it full power to appear in Frankfort as such instead of the members of the Union.

The affair had without doubt begun most favourably, when the King solemnly assembled all the Princes and the Representatives of the free towns at the Castle on May 9th, and, in his way, bade them welcome in a free, one might almost think, unprepared speech.

I wrote down the contents of the royal speech, which was never published, and was hardly faithfully analysed, even in

official newspapers, on the same day, assisted by similar notes taken by the burgo-master of Bremen, Duckwitz, and communicate that portion which was then fresh in my memory.

The King's speech contained three principal heads, and appeared to aim at a justification of the Prussian policy from without, as well as to show what path Prussia had worked out for herself, as a pattern proportionate to the steps of those Governments whose Princes were assembled before the King.

The first head contained a clear exposition of the relations between Prussia and Austria. The King knew how to separate the above family bonds of the two Houses, 'from the pretentions of the Schwarzenburg Cabinet,' and compared the Emperor's last letter with the last note of the Cabinet, in order to show how the family bond was still a close and friendly one, whereas the policy of the Cabinet expressed itself as purely hostile. From this, the King went on to special questions concerning peace and war, and expressed themselves as follows:

'If Austria really thought of making the continuation of the Alliance and the Union which would be developed from it the cause of the war, of which there is at this moment as much possibility as improbability, I have a mind not to begin the war, but to protect myself with all my strength against the rapacious invasion, contrary to all international law. I am therefore not preparing to equip, because, according to the decisions of the agreements on which the German Alliance rests, I regard a war within the Confederacy as being as contrary to international law as it is lawless; I rely upon my good cause and the strengths of my army.

'I communicate this to the Princes here assembled only that they may see on the one hand that Prussia does not allow herself to be intimidated by means of threats, on the other hand, that I may be free from the responsibility, in case the Princes devoted to the Confederacy should become involved in war. I do not urge any of the Confederate Sovereigns to remain true to the Confederacy, and shall therefore not blame any one of the Sovereigns, if, out of consideration for the welfare of the country, he will not run the chances of war at

the moment, and separates from the Confederacy. I beg the Gracious Sovereigns carefully to consider this point.'

The second chief head of the speech contained a short historical description of the course of relations in the Confederacy up to that moment. The King laid particular stress upon the fact that he owed the heartiest thanks to the wise and patriotic men of the Erfurt Parliament, and said:

'Hard words have been let fall, but difficult complications have been solved by means of wise moderation. All Germany, and particularly the Princes, must honourably acknowledge, and should never forget it.'

He called the Constitution a 'happily improved' one.

The third principal head contained the proposals for the moment, which, it is true, were not given with the clearness which might have been expected and demanded.

This only might be concluded with certainty from it, that the King was steadfastly determined not only on maintaining the Confederacy, but also on cultivating the union to perfection. Meanwhile, however, on account of the Congress summoned by Austria to Frankfort, only a provisory form could be established, concerning which he would have the bills decided on by him communicated by his Ministers to the Ministers concerned in the matter.

'As regards the Constitution,' said he, 'I shall thus adopt it. I beg my Gracious Sovereigns not to lose sight of the word "shall?"' He did not say 'when.'

With regard to the formation of the Frankfort Congress, the King expressed himself to the effect that it could only proceed from the college of Princes actually assembled here, naturally, only from those Princes who wished to remain with the Confederacy on the whole.

The close consisted of general hearty words to the Princes, concerning their being together and the advantages of their general consultations.

The Grand Duke of Baden, as senior Prince, answered the King's address in their name, according to a previous agreement:

'I thank Your Royal Majesty in the name of the Princes

here assembled for the fresh proof of your esteemed confidence, and we hope that Your Majesty will commission your Ministry to communicate the utterances just made to our Ministers here, with the object of consulting, in order so to arrange it, that it will suffice for the prosperity of the Fatherland.'

They were in very high spirits. At the dinner which took place immediately afterwards in the white hall of the castle, warm words full of hope were spoken. Even the Elector of Hesse who answered the King's toast at table, appeared to have become reconciled to the cause.

He was marked out by the King in every way, as if a more friendly attitude towards the Confederacy was to be flattered into him. But how little this intention was fulfilled was to be shown during the next few days.

Throughout the great public, the news of what had occurred at the Congress, little that was certain and trustworthy as had been published in the newspapers, had aroused the most pleasant expectations.

When, on the 13th of May, the King, on the occasion of a great parade, *Unter den Linden*, showed himself with the Princes in his suite, he was greeted with an amount of rejoicing which seemed to surprise even him.

The King did not take a personal part in the transactions, which began on the 10th of May. The official outside representation of the Congress of Princes was entrusted to the Grand-Duke of Baden, who had devoted himself with the greatest zeal to general affairs, and whose patriotic heart beat higher during these days of the Congress of Princes than the world has ever known or acknowledged It was touching to see how my hardly tried father-in-law, more deeply bowed by the Revolution than most of the other Princes, threw himself with his whole soul into the idea of unity, and nothing was more unjust and depressing than when the Congress of Princes was attacked by hostile voices respecting the purity of his intentions.

I may at this day again express my conviction that, during the long and eventful years of Germany's develop-

ment, which I saw pass by, hardly a moment has again arrived in which a considerable number of Princes were so decidedly and sympathetically filled with Prussia's German vocation.

In Vienna, and at the German Royal Courts, they were better convinced of the weighty seriousness of the transactions of the Congress than in many an editor's office of so-called Liberal papers, whence everything was done which could possibly depreciate the Congress. The German Princes, they said, would never relinquish their particular interests, they would only veto German unity, which is and will remain the cause of the people. In reality, from beginning to end, the transactions of the Princes had maintained a character of the greatest honesty.

There was no dearth of jealous wars of words, sharp remarks, of weighty utterances, well-composed speeches, particularly from the Duke of Oldenburg, who defended the cause of the Union with zeal and skill. Almost all the Princes united during the course of the debate concerning the chief objects, and as regarded the reading of the work of the Constitution, the Princes reached the end before the Ministers. We had voted on every paragraph, and the acceptance followed through the invariable establishment of the majority on my side.

I had supposed that the King would be very much pleased with this result, and made him a report to this effect. For some incomprehensible reason this circumstance produced an exactly opposite effect on him. He became almost ungracious, because the matter was overhastened; there were so many difficulties to overcome that he was oppressed by it; the goal could not be reached by springing at it. He wound up his long speech, which was not very reassuring, with the repeated warning: '*pas trop de zèle, mon cher ami, pas trop de zèle.*'

With this view, that a slower progress forwards would be more desirable I recognised to the full the apparent efforts of the Court to divert the Princes from the seriousness of the questions by means of an almost unpleasant amount of festivities and distractions. The Ministerial Conferences, in

which Count Brandenburg and Schleinitz took part for Prussia, and the direction of which was confided to General von Radowitz, were begun on May 10th.

Prussia's propositions had previously been made known in a memorial, and the transaction was included in the four principal sessions between May 10 and May 14.

The Prussian Ministry proposed that a Provisory Unionist Government should be appointed, as long as the carrying out of the Constitution of the Union was not possible. Respecting its arrangement and the settlement of its authority, the statute of the treaty of May 26th, 1849 was to be generally followed. It was to be formed by the committee of the College of Princes, and an organ which would form a link between the two. The Committee was to have at least that authority which the statute mentioned gives the Crown of Prussia. The College of Princes will be formed by the Plenipotentiaries of the States belonging to the Union. Each of these States has the right to be represented at the same by a special Plenipotentiary, but the voting should go by divisions.

As regarded the position of the Union in respect of the Congress sent to Frankfort by Austria, Prussia proposed that it should be settled by the Unionist Governments. Nevertheless, a number of preliminary conditions would be regarded as indispensable.

First of all, the Unionist Governments must not only agree beforehand concerning their attitude in Frankfort, but the answer to the Austrian invitation was to be made simultaneously by all, and information be sent to the other German Courts of the motives which ruled the general conduct of the Unionist Governments. Also preparations were to be made, so that the reasons for which and the conditions under which the Frankfort Congress took place, should be brought to the knowledge of the public in a proper form.

As full unity was to be expected on the part of almost all the Ministers, Hassenpflug had made an attempt at the very first session to break up the Conference by means of a preliminary question. He had made them wait a long time for

his appearance at the session fixed for seven o'clock in the evening, and intentionally excused himself on his arrival for not having been able to come sooner on account of a dinner given by Herr von Prokesch. As was afterwards betrayed by a person who had been present at table, a plot had actually been formed to disturb the Conference.

Herr von Hassenpflug asserted that the invitation had only been made to the Princes with the assistance of responsible Ministers, whereas members of the Administrative Council had also been present. There was an angry scene, which was particularly wounding to Radowitz. As Hassenpflug abstained from all actual explanations with the repeated assertion that there were persons in the assembly who had not been invited, his conduct had assumed an altogether too insulting character.

After the close of the session my Minister came to me in the greatest excitement and informed me of what had occurred. I went with Herr von Seebeck to the Duke of Oldenburg, who had just been made acquainted with what had happened through his Minister, Eisendecher. We agreed to bring about a meeting of the Princes, with the exclusion of the Elector of Hesse, during the following forenoon, and to propose to them to express to the King, through General von Radowitz, the deepest regret at the occurrence, and to give him information concerning the decision only to continue transactions with the Electoral Minister, when he had furnished a satisfactory explanation of his conduct during the next session.

My proposals were unanimously accepted on the following day in the Assembly of Princes, and my Minister received a commission to bring the idea and the decision of the Princes to the knowledge of General von Radowitz, and to request his mediation with the King.

Radowitz was very much pleased at this, and at once expressed his readiness to drive immediately to Bellevue to the King. He hoped to find the Elector of Hesse there, who had been invited to dinner. Meanwhile the Elector, while Radowitz was making his speech to the King, had already left Bellevue, and the matter was carried on by means of

letters. The King challenged the Elector to instruct his Commissioner to take back the declaration of yesterday, unless he preferred to appoint another Commissioner.

Meanwhile the letter reached the hands of the Elector too late, and so Herr von Hassenpflug appeared, without the slightest presentiment, at the Session of Ministers on the evening of May 11th.

To his surprise, he was challenged by Herr von Schleinitz either to leave the Assembly or to furnish the explanation demanded. He decided to do the latter, and the retraction of his declarations of yesterday was inserted in the protocol of the second session, which became known to the world, but was not easy to understand without a commentary on account of its somewhat obscure conception.

As the Hessian manœuvres had quickly fallen to the ground in this way, there remained nothing for Hassenpflug the next day, beyond simply continuing to oppose the decisions of the much greater majority of the Ministers. Only Mecklenburg-Strelitz and Schaumburg-Lippe joined the Electorate's refusals, nevertheless, all three carefully avoided announcing their withdrawal from the Union, or even their intention to do so.

If no final decision had been arrived at concerning the future constitution of the Union, its existence had nevertheless been maintained, and they had agreed upon the direction during the next few months. The College of Princes, with its Plenipotentiaries, took the place of the Administrative Council, and complete unanimity had been established concerning the position of the Confederacy with regard to Foreign Affairs. The Union Governments bound themselves to send an immediate reply to the Austrian invitation to Frankfort, and to send instructions to their Plenipotentiaries immediately.

The Frankfort Conference was to be declared only a free assembling of the former Confederates, and means of defence furnished against the demand raised by Austria for the observance of the right to preside which had died out with the old Confederate Constitution, as well as the acceptance of the idea that the Frankfort Assembly represented the full number of the former Diet.

What remained unsettled as an open question was, in fact, the definite settlement of the inner organisation, and here it was shown what a dangerous mistake the adjournment of Parliament had been. All the disputed points in the Constitution could only be decided, when Parliament again assembled.

When, at the last Assembly of the Princes, they started the question concerning the further course of affairs, I attempted to show how necessary it was that the Parliament should again enter into activity as soon as possible I proposed a resolution which bore reference to its summoning, and it was accepted by a large majority.

My secretary, von Meyern, put it in form in a fair copy, and I induced the gentlemen to sign the document itself. I still preserve this interesting protocol, which all Princes, with the exception of the Elector of Hesse, had signed with their own hands. Only the Grand-Duke Frederick Francis made the addition: 'only agreed to on condition that this matter is mentioned amongst the Ministers.' The resolution ran as follows:

'The undersigned Princes have declared their consent to instruct their several Ministers, that they are to do their best at the General Conferences to settle the period for the resummoning of Parliament for a not undecided time, but that it may be preliminarily fixed for the month of August of this year.'

With this, the consultations of the Berlin Congress of Princes were at an end.

The allies expressed their thanks to me in the friendliest words for having, through my direction, first made the transactions possible in the truest sense of the word. The close of the Congress took place in the Royal Castle, on the 16th of May.

The King received an assembly of German Princes and representatives of free towns, such as he had never before seen, nor saw afterwards in Berlin, on the throne, in the most solemn manner.

On this day, Frederick William made one of his most

brilliant and remarkable speeches; he spoke freely and in high spirits, uninterruptedly, for almost an hour. What was known of it in public could hardly furnish an idea of the comprehensive contents, the preservation of which for posterity has only been made possible by the happy memory of Syndic Banks, whose notes were placed at my disposal, and which I shall fully reproduce here:

'*Berlin, May* 16, 1850.

'The King had assembled the allied Princes and the representatives of the free Hanseatic towns, in order to lay the results before them, for close examination at the close of the Congress, and to draw their attention to the moments which might be influential for the conduct of all and each single member, just as the Congress was opened in a similar way.

'I introduce the King in the midst of his harangue, merely adding by way of preface, that I do not propose to reproduce the exact expressions and remarks to which the King repeatedly returned.

'"I did not," said the King, "my Most Gracious Sovereigns and representatives of the free towns, conceal from you, at the beginning of our Congress, the dangers which may possibly be united, after Austria's threatening speech, with the maintenance and continuance of our union. Since then no reply has been made me on any side, the general labours have been continued; I may perhaps take your silence as an answer. I look back with thankfulness and pleasant emotion at the result of our labours. By far the majority of the allies have, in the patriotic meaning of the word, united concerning general arrangements and measures; not one has withdrawn from the Alliance. We have in nine days accomplished what they took nine months to do at Vienna. The revised Constitution could not yet be carried out, because all have not agreed. I turn at once to those who think they must still withhold their decisions. I have explained that I shall be angry with no one, whose conscientious convictions do not allow him to join us in our progress, I have no right and no reason to doubt this conviction. But I ask you, my most

gracious gentlemen, to consider the position you adopt with regard to your people. Times are growing more and more serious, heavy storms may be hovering over our Fatherland, The communistic uproar in France is increasing, half of the army has gone over, it is very much a question whether the officers and non-commissioned officers will succeed in leading them against the insurrectionary masses. Should they not succeed, the Government is lost, and war with Germany is the unavoidable result.

'"I know that your troops are trustworthy, the poison has not yet spread so far in Germany. But the communistic rebellion has its links in Germany, insurrections will break out: can you conquer them with your own aid? I shall help, wherever it may be, with every sacrifice. But if I have to send 30,000 men to the Rhine, shall I be able to help? How has it been with me in my own land? In Berlin there are 300,000 well-affected, 90,000 without any feeling whatever, 10,000 insurrectionists, and nevertheless, I fell in March, because those 390,000 did nothing to suppress the insurrection.

'"It is true" (the King said this in a raised voice and full of indignation), "it is true that I fell by treachery, by cruel treachery, and I assure you that as long as I live I shall not so fall again.

'"The Constitution could not be carried out on account of the want of explanations; a Provisory Government had to be formed.

'"I go by the representation made me by my Minister, I do not go into details. Should I meantime be mistaken, I beg that I may be corrected. A provisory unionist direction has been established, and a Provisory College of Princes on the exclusive foundation of the statute of May 26th. The successive execution and furthering will, as my Ministers assure me, meet with no difficulties.

'"A pleasant unanimity amongst the great majority has been reached concerning the answer to Austria and the Congress at Frankfort. I used to think that that which we have considered and decided here could find a speedy continuation at a meeting in Gotha, but I yield to a representation that such

a consultation during the Congress at Frankfort might give offence and be a hindrance.

'"This Frankfort Congress can only be a real one, at which no one can be outvoted by a majority, as was the case here. In the interim, the affairs of the joint alliance must be attended to, which I have acknowledged and shall always regard as binding.

'"But this interim cannot be of long duration; the affairs of our German fatherland need a speedy settlement.

'"The Munich project lies first before us, as soon as it is given out.

'"What aim it has, for what result Herr von Pfordten has destined it, I am not in a position to perceive, unless it aims at the spoliation of the Small States. I shall never help in this; I shall protect the Small States with all my power; that is my German duty.

'"But the project assumes an entirely different character through the Austrian conditions. Austria wishes to enter with all her States; remark this well, the future alliance will be explicitly designated as an Austro-German alliance. We are to take in the Poles, Magyars, and Italians. These nations have long been striving after this, to force themselves into Germany, with the exception, it is true, of the Italians, to whom I will not ascribe a desire to intrude. I shall never consent to Germany's being alienated from herself.

'"I consider the formation of our nation almost as a providential ordinance, she shall preserve Germany for herself.

'"I have laid down what I consider salutary for our Fatherland in the bill for the Constitution of May 26. No desire for aggrandisement leads me, no eagerness to rule, I swear it before God," (here the King raised his hand as if taking the oath) "I wish to protect the rights of all States, even the smallest, that is my calling as Sovereign of the largest German State. I expect from no one a sacrifice which I do not consider necessary for the weal of the Fatherland.

'"I summon Frankfort with the purest purpose, I long for an understanding, and shall help to bring it about with all

my strength. But if nothing is effected, and if a disturbance was made in our unity, I shall then draw back on myself, I shall take measures, and, with God's help, last out the storms which are preparing.

'"I am in a different position from you, and can speak, and, if necessary, act otherwise, because Providence has placed me at the head of sixteen millions, my allies only of six millions, but my will belongs to the German Fatherland.

'"And now let me close with thanks for your having come, my most gracious gentlemen, for the honour which you have shown me, for the confidence which you have placed in me. I speak to you as a brother, I regard you as brothers. May the Lord bless what we have begun with pure intentions!"'

It was the close of the speech, particularly, which aroused great emotion in many of the assembled Princes. The older ones amongst the sovereigns pressed around the King with many words of thanks, hearty embraces followed, and the official gathering broke up gradually. The general impression at first outweighed all critical utterance.

But it was indeed difficult, feeling apart, to discover the right meaning of the long speech. Most of what must become decisive for the future was so indefinite that it seemed as if one were gazing at a void, at the end of the clever speech. One thing incessantly sounded very doubtful and mysterious to me, and I asked myself and others if I had heard aright. No new assembly of Princes, no continuance of the Congress at Gotha, no summoning of Parliament, no definite Constitution! The King had said it unequivocally: 'he yielded to the representation that a continuance of the Congress at Gotha might give offence.'

I was not to remain long in uncertainty. Radowitz had been announced late in the night. He came with a commission from his master, first conveyed to me the King's particular thanks for my efforts in behalf of the good cause, and expressed his regret that they had failed in the principal thing, as the Ministerial Conferences had not produced the impression that they would be able to unite with regard to the Constitution of the Confederacy.

I did not conceal from General von Radowitz my view that the failure had been essentially brought about by the Prussian Government, because the opposition to the disaffected had not been repulsed seriously enough, and the small, unimportant differences between the faithful partisans much too highly estimated. Herr von Radowitz did not contradict me.

I was unfortunately unable to stay for the celebration of the wedding of my cousin of Meiningen, at Berlin, and started for home on the 17th of May. Taking things all in all, some little had been achieved, the principal object perhaps lost. Yet I was far from giving up the work. I tried first of all to weaken, as much as possible, the bad impression which the result of the Congress might make outside, and wrote to this effect to my brother, with whom I had kept up the liveliest correspondence during the whole time of the Congress.

As, in this correspondence, many details are given which are calculated to complete my story, I may be allowed to close the chapter with the insertion of the letters exchanged by my brother and myself during these exciting days:

'*Berlin, May* 13, 1850.

'. . . . In accordance with my firm design and the conferences with Stockmar (who, however, has left me in the lurch) I took possession of the question and therewith of the direction of affairs. I received the direct commission from the King personally to lead the Princes, as it were, and, in confidential conferences with all of them, to learn their private views on the one hand, on the other, should they greatly differ, to bring them to an agreement. Whether it was because I was the most zealous "urger" of the German Cause, or because they had real confidence in me, the noble gentlemen acknowledged me as quasi president; I had the conferences in my apartments at the castle; I issued invitations to them, and, with regard to the leadership, as far as it was possible, introduced parliamentary procedure, so as to prevent all speaking at once.

'For this reason, as well as that none of the other sovereigns has much inclination to enter into direct con-

nection with the Prussian Ministry, I have become the only medium between the latter and the noble gentlemen.

'I cannot boast of the confidence reposed in me by the Ministry. Herr von Radowitz, who, as commissioner, leads the much more important Conferences of the Ministers, makes one an exact report each time, before and after the meetings, so that we act according to a mutual understanding. So much for the manner *in which* we treat. As far as concerns what is treated, only two ways can possibly be adopted according to the proposals of the Prussian Governments* unless they wish the Union to cease at once with the further alliance. They abstract, in this, all possibility of war, and consider both ways as arising unobstructed from the free decision.

'First way. The King declares that he will hold fast to what has been given, he extends the flag around which the Princes who are faithful to the Union have to assemble in any event. This way is certainly the boldest one, and the most suitable to the views of many Princes and most nations.

'Only practically carried out and politically regarded, there are the following considerations. On entering upon the same, it may certainly be calculated that the Thuringian Princes, Oldenburg and Brunswick, would perhaps assemble in support of the flag. On the other hand, both Hesses, Nassau, both Mecklenburgs, Saxony, etc., would definitely withdraw. One consequence of this withdrawal would be:

'1 A total change of the suffrage relations in the Confederacy, and thereby the impossibility of maintaining a Parliament.

'2 The certainty that an aggrandised Prussia only consists as it were of a few small States.

'Such a result, however, can be as little desired by the faithful Princes as by the Prussian Government. Moreover, there is no possibility anywhere of physical compulsion by means of which to hold the deserting Princes fast.

* The following are partly literal reproductions of General von Radowitz's declarations, which he had been commissioned by the King to make before the Congress of Princes on May 10, as the programme of the Prussian Ministry with regard to the Union.

'With some, the geographical position of their States even makes it a necessity, in case the neighbours withdraw, to retire also from the alliance, for example, Baden.

'Second way. The Confederacy will be clung to and a protocol will decide (for the public) which of the Princes wished to go the first way. The King declares his assent to the Constitution, and promises to summon the Parliament immediately after the Frankfort Conference. The King provisorily undertakes the Unionist Government. The Administrative Council will not continue to exist. All Princes send envoys to Frankfort, not on account of the Austrian threat, nor in acknowledgment of the Austrian right to preside, but out of national considerations.

'All the representatives of the Princes receive their instructions from the College of Princes at this moment really assembled in Berlin, as the College of the Union, from which, by means of a committee, a Council of Princes will be formed and the Provisory Unionist Government set aside.

'Although this way is neither the most courageous nor, taken generally, the one to be most recommended, it nevertheless offers, considering the difficulties of the moment, far more prerogatives for the preservation of the Union than the first one, which, under the existing circumstances, would entirely destroy it, for: 1. Those Princes, who, because they mistake the intentions of the Austrian Cabinet, fear to allow the Union to spring into existence at once, will be kept in it, without excluding themselves from that which will perhaps be restored. 2. If that happens which is to be expected from the Frankfort transactions, that, namely, the intentions of the Austrian Cabinet, being known to be what they are, nothing less than the lawful grounding of a new Confederate State will be attempted, many of the now wavering States will hasten over to the Union. In the negotiations concerning these proposals the parties are now formed as follows:

'As to the so-called Thuringian States, Brunswick and Oldenburg, the Duke as well as the Grand-Duke, deserve particular praise and are my firm supporters.

'All the support goes with the proposals. The two Hesses

form the opposition. They do not want to go out of the Union, nor do they wish to allow it to enter into life. The Elector is a fearful personage, still worse than his Minister Hassenpflug.

'Mecklenburg-Schwerin wavers between the two parties, nevertheless, I hope that we shall win the Grand-Duke over entirely through his good disposition. Mecklenburg-Strelitz and Lippe-Schaumburg wish to do nothing but hinder. They are the Extreme Right, and entirely Austrian. Baden is in the bad position of being, with the best will, unable to remain with the Union; her geographical position is the chief cause of this.

'I hope that you will have in this a clear picture of the situation. We have not gone very far; nevertheless, things are at this moment much better for Germany and the Union than they appeared during the first two days.'

The answer which was immediately made by my brother to this letter showed a strong difference in our views. Unfortunately I must further admit that his pessimism, which at first appeared to me as a very simple and light point of view, was after all to turn out correct, and may therefore be of greater interest for retrospective historical observation than it was pleasant to me at the time.

'*Buckingham Palace, May* 18*th.*

'My hearty thanks for your friendly letter of the 13th, which gives me so pleasing a report of the Berlin transactions. You deserve particular praise for the zeal with which you fight for the German cause. Of the two possible ways which you mention, I hope to God that you will take the first, and not the second, which appears to me to offer no kind of advantage. How is it possible to suppose, that the States which, on the adoption of the first way, that is, the simple, honourable carrying out of the Three Kings' Alliance, after the acceptance of the Constitution contained in it through the Erfurt Parliament, would withdraw, or breaking their word to the allies, the Parliament and the people, would retire, that they would be allowed to go *unconnected* to Frankfort, and

there expose themselves to the intrigues of Austria and the Kings?

'Whilst Hesse may, it is true, hesitate to withdraw faithlessly in Berlin in the face of her allies, in company with the Imperial State and all the kingdoms, she will no longer feel any kind of shame or fear whatever. Whereas the question now simply is: Will you keep your word or not? In Frankfort it will be: Should not every effort be made to preserve the outward unity of Germany, even if they have only to begin again with a modified Diet? Cannot Austria, cannot the Kings incessantly bring forward impracticable proposals, whose considerations will each time again be the duty of the individual States, and the rejection of which Prussia will each time have to take upon herself?

'No! the States, which wish to be saved, need a definite decree; having opposed the vague proposals of a Confederate revision, it will be possible to effect the conviction of the Governments through public opinion. The nobler portion of the German nation has already been too long kept in suspense and mocked at; it is necessary here, not to make ourselves any longer the laughing stock of Europe. It was a daring thing to bring the Princes together; they cannot now separate, without having performed their work, particularly after Erfurt has finished what was assigned to her.

'In truth, no negotiations whatever are necessary. The Princes had made propositions to their Parliament which the latter had accepted, and with this the law is made. Only a formal act of sanction was needed, which is still required of the Princes in Berlin. If some of them really wish to betray their own work, which I can hardly believe, it has never been made so formally difficult for them as now in Berlin; is it a good policy to make it easier for them? or to wait for later conviction with people who, if they do not wish to remain true now, will prove to have learned nothing from 1848 and 1849?

'But I must close. Stockmar is unfortunately very ill with inflammation of the throat at Coburg, as Dr Sommer, who is treating him, writes me. If he had only gone to Berlin instead of to Coburg!'

Before this letter was in my hands, I had already given my brother news of the close of the Congress, the result of which, as is seen, could by no means satisfy his sanguine temperament.

'*Berlin, May 16th*, 1850.

'At last the protocols are closed, and early to-morrow everyone will disperse. The result of the Congress may, if one looks at it less with theoretical than with practical eyes, nevertheless be called a satisfactory one. We have succeeded, in three principal things, which, considering the general state of affairs, and when one has known the difficulties which had to be surmounted, have left the Princes, as well as the German people, some hope of a definitely good state of things:

'1. We have preserved the Union.

'2. We have lost no members from the same, but, on the contrary, in accordance with the plan hinted at in my earlier report, have opened up a possibility of again winning over individuals from amongst the members who had already fallen off.

'3. We have acted in a spirit of reconciliation towards the Austrians, and shown them, in case they really mean to act honourably towards us, the road which they must follow with us.

'If I put the matter concisely, the following has been attained:

'The alliance will continue for two months longer. The Administrative Council has ceased, and the College of Princes takes its place. The Unionist Government will be appointed, a joint note will be addressed to Austria and the German States outside our league, and, finally, the Congress in Frankfort will be summoned according to joint instructions. Parliament remains adjourned until after the end of the Congress. Prussia and most of the Princes assembled here have acknowledged the Erfurt Constitution, reserving some modifications.

'The protocols, which I shall send you as soon as they are printed, and which I beg you to read carefully, will

show you the lifeless and almost ridiculous reservations of Hesse and several others.

'The King closed the transactions to-day with a striking speech, which moved everyone to tears.

'It contained a detailed recapitulation of all that has passed, a touching description of present circumstances, and a thrilling warning to those Princes who have been the cause of our arriving at no definite conclusion.

'The Congress deserved the name of comfortable. The Princes negotiated together like cousins, who know and value one another, no dispute as to rank, no ludicrous mistrust, no false ambition arose. They spoke warmly and openly. Their tempers often grew heated, but they separated friends. At parting the Elector offered me his hand in a friendly manner, and although I was often forced to be hard with him, he showed me of his own accord that he parted from me without anger.

'I think that I have acted altogether to your mind, and that our House has shown itself here also to be truly German.

'Whether you consider what we have attained in the principal matter to be little or much, yet I am proud to consider myself not only the author of this success, but particularly also the means of having attained it.

'When we parted from the assembled Ministers, the King first addressed these flattering words to me: "We should never forget that the happy result is your work."'

'*Osborne, May* 26, 1850.

'DEAR ERNEST,—Accept my thanks for your friendly letter before your departure from Berlin. I am sorry to have to disturb your feeling of joy and high satisfaction over the Berlin work. I have already written to Stockmar that I unfortunately see the constellations from my London Observatory in an *entirely different* aspect from what they must appear to you.

'After my last letter you will already be prepared for my view, that I consider a provisory government of two months duration, after which the Princes are again free to make their

decision, and are meantime also free to take part in the full session at Frankfort, and to make reservations for this provisory government, to be *painful* for the Union as the result of the Congress of Princes, after the completion of the Constitution by the Erfurt Parliament, and doubly painful, that it should go forth to the world as your work, as the King called it. Far be it from me to reproach you, or to overlook the endless difficulties against which you had to struggle. But the Princes have suffered a horrible blow through such declarations of bankruptcy, and the Alliance of May 26 is exposed to fresh dangers.

'It can now only be hoped that the mistakes which Austria and the Kings will make at Frankfort, will place the cause in a somewhat better position. For so much truth lies in the fundamental idea of the Three Kings' Alliance, that it would shine through even the thickest cloud; but the sky is very much overcast.

'Meanwhile, do not let yourself be discouraged from fighting on for the good cause, but be encouraged, on the contrary, to save what there is to save.

'As, in the world, the final judgment depends on final success, the part which you have taken in the Berlin decisions will also naturally be judged otherwise, if the Union is carried out after a new Frankfort episode, or if it should be forever destroyed there.'

Much as was fine and true in this letter of my brother's, I could only answer his reflections with the following remarks, which will most suitably close the observations concerning the Congress of Princes.

'*Gotha, June* 3, 1850.

'My thanks for the two kind letters, in which you pour out your heart over our sad German affairs. I entirely agree with your views, but as no one can ride through a stone wall, we must only be thankful to God that everything has not been lost. Had the King come to Gotha ten days earlier, a different result might have been obtained.

'The Stahl-Gerlach party surrounds the King completely, it was to them that we owed the frightful mistakes which were made at Erfurt, against which I was so exasperated at the time.

'The King certainly has the best will, but these people urge him more and more over to the other side. Real reaction and the bloodiest kind of civil war are at our door. We are very clearsighted concerning this, and twelve Princes share my views. A break on one side or the other must follow; may the German nation then be able to separate the faithful Princes from the traitors. Until now, before the envoys of the united Princes can arrive in Frankfort, they have wrapped themselves up in great mystery. Nevertheless, I have succeeded in obtaining news by means of the communications of a confidant, which I send you. I do not think that you will already know much of the transaction. I am still suffering, and very much depressed; added to all, there are signs of a near storm in the transactions of the Gotha Parliament. Serious days are coming. I rely entirely upon Seebeck's courage and skill. Now farewell,' etc.

## CHAPTER IX

ATTEMPT ON THE LIFE OF THE KING OF PRUSSIA.—THE EMPEROR OF RUSSIA IN WARSAW.—THE PRINCE OF PRUSSIA MEETS HIM THERE.—THE AUSTRIAN ENVOY AT FRANKFORT.—UPHOLDS THE CONFEDERATE ACTS OF 1815 AND 1820.—WITHDRAWAL OF SAXONY FROM THE ALLIANCE.—REPORTS OF THE OCCURENCES OF JUNE THE 6TH.—PRINCE SCHWARZENBURG'S POLICY.—LETTERS FROM PRINCE ALBERT.—PROTEST OF KING FREDERICK WILLIAM.—RADOWITZ MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS.—FREDERICK WILLIAM INVITES THE DUKE TO HUNT WITH HIM.—LETTER TO PRINCE ALBERT.—LETTER TO THE DUKE FROM RADOWITZ.—ARGUMENTS OF THE DUKE'S VIENNESE KINSMEN.—FREDERICK WILLIAM WRITES TO ABANDON THE HUNTING PARTY.—GERMANY'S FATE AGAIN DECIDED BY THE CZAR.—DEATH OF COUNT BRANDENBURG.—LETTER FROM THE KING OF PRUSSIA.—MOBILISATION OF PRUSSIAN TROOPS.—THE DUKE REQUESTS A COMMAND OF THE UNIONIST CONTINGENT CORPS.—MORE FAVOURABLE VIEWS FOR GERMANY IN ENGLAND.—RADOWITZ'S MISSION TO THE ENGLISH COURT.—LETTER FROM PRINCE ALBERT.—LETTER TO PRINCE ALBERT FROM PRINCE LEININGEN.—THE PRINCE OF PRUSSIA ON THE SITUATION.—THE DUKE GOES TO BERLIN.—ASSEMBLY OF THE PRUSSIAN COUNCIL OF MINISTERS AT BELLEVUE.—THE DUKE REQUESTS A FAREWELL AUDIENCE OF THE KING OF PRUSSIA.—CORDIALLY RECEIVED.—INCREDULITY OF THE QUEEN.—BURIAL OF THE UNION.—PERSONAL REMINISCENCES OF FREDERICK WILLIAM IV.—THE TRANSACTIONS AT OLMUTZ UNDER PRUSSIAN INTERVENTION.—LETTER FROM KING LEOPOLD.

A FEW days after the end of the Congress of Princes, an attempt on the life of the King took place in Berlin. He was fortunately only slightly wounded in the arm, but the boldness with which the crime was carried out aroused frightful excitement and bitterness amongst the parties who, as has since then been almost invariable in such cases, were greatly inclined to assume a kind of co-responsibility. Although the

murderer had been seized, the Berlin police had nevertheless followed a false track; and in the circles of the Liberal and Democratic parties, arrests had been made which were pretended to be the signal for general reaction. There were actually reasons given for tracing back events connected with influences which were exercised by the emigrants and republican societies of foreign countries.

At that time I had, through my connection with England, knowledge of the wide-spread organisation of secret clubs, which had openly planned the murder of the Sovereign in their assemblies.

In London there existed two German social republican societies. A real branch of the members was designated by the name of *Blindlinge* (the blind-folded) of whom there were eighteen or twenty in May 1850, of whom seven were in Germany and four in Berlin.

The activity of the clubs had, at that time, increased extraordinarily, and although it was not known to me that the judicial examination of the murderer, Selfeloge, had brought to light the proof of his connection with the London clubs, it was nevertheless a conspicuous fact, that on the 2nd of May information had been furnished in a London letter of coming events of a grave nature, and advice was given that no measures of precaution should be neglected in Berlin, particularly about the Court there.

The informant, who gave the assurance that he would soon be forced to go to Berlin himself, in order to make an important announcement, complained extremely of 'the blindness and unpardonable negligence of the Prussian envoy, who did nothing to induce the English Government to take steps against these hot-beds of regicides.'

In Germany, instead of that, events and dangers of the above-mentioned kind were only made use of by the reactionary parties to make the sympathies which still existed for national wants everywhere suspected of being revolutionary and dangerous, and to prove to the King personally the necessity of a complete and unreserved return to the Stahl and Gerlach principles.

But the time for this had not yet arrived. The King was more irritated by Austria's attitude in Frankfort and her open claims to the old position of head of the States Confederacy than could have been supposed, and the Austrian party at the Prussian Court had not yet brought him down to yielding to his youthful nephew, the Emperor of Austria, the former prominent position in the German Confederacy without concessions to Prussian leadership.

That even such reasonable and simple proposals as the division of the presidency between Austria and Prussia were coolly repulsed in Vienna, injured the King personally, and he only wished to make sure of his Russian relations before acting more energetically according to the union and the decisions of the Diet of Princes.

As the Emperor of Russia had come to Warsaw, the Prince of Prussia, under pretence of welcoming him in the neighbouring capital, went thither on May 26th, and was accompanied by the brother of Minister Manteuffel, the King's aide-de-camp. The latter brought a letter from the King to the Emperor Nicholas, in which, according to the newspapers, it was said that Prussia could on no condition agree to the reinstatement of the old Confederate Diet, and that the difficulties which the harmony between Austria and Prussia concerning the German cause, had hitherto presented, were to be sought for in the policy lately followed by Austria.

How far this letter from the King had a favourable effect, or how far it was the Prince's personal influence, which appeared to have convinced the Emperor of Russia that the Austrians had been too greatly indulged, I cannot judge.

It is known, that Prince Schwarzenburg hastened to Warsaw, in order to justify his Government in the eyes of the all-powerful saviour of Austria, and that the Emperor of Austria personally preferred to abandon the journey already planned to Warsaw. There were great rejoicings over the Prince of Prussia in all patriotic circles which were informed of the Warsaw events. My brother also shared this good opinion :

'The only good thing for Germany,' he wrote me at the

time, 'is the firm and reflecting attitude of the Prince of Prussia, who has really improved extraordinarily and learned a great deal in these sad times. He has known how to make use of his Russian journey with dignity and skill, as a means of opening the Emperor's eyes.'

The latter was certainly of importance with regard to the German Question. As to the Schleswig-Holstein affair, which had also formed the object of discussion, as has already been remarked in former paragraphs, there was nothing more to be done. Nevertheless, as regarded the Frankfort Confederate Diet, it had found as little grace in the eyes of the Czar, as the plans of reform of the four Kings and the Emperor of Austria designed for the humiliation of Prussia.

Under these circumstances, the Berlin Cabinet was in a position to follow the policy begun by the Congress of Princes and the Berlin Conferences for some time longer.

The Administrative Council of the Union fulfilled the task assigned it, and led the affairs over to the Committee of the College of Princes, which met during the first days of June. The greatest publicity was given the protocols of the Berlin Conferences, not undesignedly, and the Unionist Governments accepted the instructions of the Prussian Plenipotentiary for Frankfort word for word for their envoys also. Almost simultaneously with the two Plenipotentiaries, General von Peucker and Herr von Mathis, those of the remaining Confederate Governments arrived. They acted in pleasant harmony with the Governments, which had already been playing at holding a Confederate Diet for the past fourteen days, under the presidency of Austria, and had not even answered the note of the 16th of May jointly decided on by the Congress of Princes.

The Austrian envoy at Frankfort declared the Confederate Act of 1815 and the closing act of 1820 to be irrevocable, with the most undaunted boldness, and appealed to the fact that those fundamental stipulations had not been recalled by the decision of the Confederate Assembly of July 12, 1848, but had only ceased to be put in practice for the time being, for

which reason the Central Power had only been made provisory.

I tried at the time to fight against this view of Austria's in a memorandum, particularly in England and Belgium, and the Prussian Cabinet also drew much that was useful, in the memorial which has often enough been printed, from the work placed at my disposal by a friend in Frankfort.

But one thing could not be denied in the diplomatic war of pens: the political position of the Austrian Cabinet was greatly favoured by the circumstance that it was thought necessary to have the closer Alliance of May 26, 1849, on the Confederate Act, and that they had relied upon section 11 as referring to sections 6 and 7 and the closing act Art. 12. The curse of half-measures with which the Prussian Cabinet had burdened itself from the first, at the founding of the Confederate State, was now being bitterly avenged in the Frankfort Conferences.

The storms which met the envoys at Frankfort had meantime already been foreseen by our representative Seebeck, during the last sessions of the Administrative Council in Berlin.

It had not only been noticed that the long leave of absence accorded to von Radowitz did not appear very favourable, but also the circumstance that Saxony found it proper formally to withdraw from the alliance just before the meeting of the Committee of Princes, with great noise, having actually separated long before that, and that Mecklenburg-Strelitz declared herself unable to co-operate in the carrying out of the Confederate Constitution: all this was plainly shown by the diplomatic mobilisation of the Frankfort Governments.

With regard to it, the Prussian Government had, the last moment before the departure of the Plenipotentiary from Berlin, arrived at a decision to make the demand of an alternating presidency between Austria and Prussia the condition of his taking part in the Frankfort conferences. But as they had already convinced themselves by means of direct transactions between Vienna and Berlin that Austria would not make a concession of this kind, it looked as if the Frankfort

conferences were only to be brought to naught. If the Unionist Governments, on their side, came forward with the desired demands of Prussia for the alternation in the presidency, retirement from the Frankfort conferences was the only thing possible in face of the probable refusal on the part of Austria.

The Austrian Government now tried to meet this danger by using every means of force in their power.

The way in which the Unionist Governments were intimidated by means of threats of war was at that time less known specifically, because no one had any interest in speaking of the way in which Prussia already now allowed herself to be treated by the Austrian statesmen. But the reports which I may communicate here from Seebeck's faithful pen, were only too well calculated, in June 1850, to let one foresee Prussia's catastrophe, step for step:

'To-morrow the Prussian Plenipotentiaries'— writes Seebeck on the 5th of June—'will make their official visit to Count Thun, and will thereby bring the conversation around to the preliminary conditions of their admittance to the transactions of Congress. They wish that the representatives of the allied Governments may at once follow in a corresponding manner, so that, first of all, the effect to be hoped for from the unanimity of their attitude may not be weakened.

'As I have already been expressly advised by several Governments, to act throughout only in harmony with the Prussian Plenipotentiaries, I have the following to do in accordance with this request . . .' etc.

During the subsequent days the decisive report came of the occurrences of June 6th:

'In accordance with a previous arrangement, I went today at three o'clock to General von Peucker, to consider with the Plenipotentiaries of Baden, Brunswick, Oldenburg, Waldeck, Lippe, Hamburg and Lübeck what acceptance and reply the Prussians demand with regard to the presidency had met with from Count Thun. We learned that the latter had been very willing that the Prussian Government should give the presidency question a prejudicial character, as it would

have been very unpleasent if he had been forced in the assembly itself to *refuse* the demand raised for that reason *because it was unjustifiable.* Austria placed a value on the presidency, not because it was a matter of honour, but insisted on it only because the comprehension and nature of the whole assembly was contained therein.

'*It would no longer be the full Confederacy, which Austria acknowledged in it* and wished to see acknowledged, from the moment when the presidency alternated in the manner proposed. When it was remarked on Prussia's side, that, consequently, Austria, for her part, appeared to make the acknowledgment of the Assembly here to be that of the former full Assembly a preliminary condition of admittance to the Assembly, Count Thun confirmed this with a decided Yes, and added that, if the Prussian Plenipotentiaries wished, on their entrance into the Assembly, to protest against its plenary character, he as chairman, would at once have to request them to retire, as he could not then allow them to take part in the transactions. He would, indeed, immediately inform his Court of the communications made, but thought beforehand that he might with certainty give the assurance that Austria would firmly maintain the point of view once adopted.

'After hearing this, along with other less important matters, I went to Count Thun, in company with the Councillor of the Legation Liebe, and was received by him with proper cordiality. Before I had mentioned my commission, he at once informed me of the principal point in his conversation with the Prussian Plenipotentiaries.

'On my asking whether Austria demanded the presidency on principle, and the acknowledgment that the assembly was the full one called for and justified in the reconstruction of the Constitution of the joint Confederacy, he affirmed this with the addition, that if we wished to come forward against it with a protest, he would have to request us to leave the assembly.

'We arrived, in a special discussion, at the question, whether, and in how far the old Confederate Constitution had

any claims to legal validity. Upon this it was shown that he wished to know that the Confederate Act of July 12, 1848, was regarded only as a provisory retirement of the Confederate Assembly, only as temporary, through the circumstance of their recommended yielding of the leadership. Now, he said, it was necessary to withdraw from the provisors, the full assembly should make decisions to this end. It was not Austria's intention to bring the old Confederate Assembly back to life again, just as it had formerly existed, her own altered position would prevent this.

'All are invited, those who do not take part must abide by the decisions of the others. When I asked: But how, then, if all attend, and they do not unite in a decision, as is very easily possible? he answered in a somewhat despondent tone: Then, indeed, the old Confederate Constitution must be resuscitated. To a remark which went deeper into the legal and political discussion of the question, he offered the reply, that we would with difficulty mutually convince one another as our points of view were too diverse, and even if we were able to come to an understanding, our constituents would not therefore necessarily be of the same mind.

'What the Count allowed me to see of the Austrian projects for the Constitution, greatly resembled the Munich project, only that the parliamentary ingredient appeared much lessened. He could find no appropriate expression, for what they call representation of the people was not contained in his idea. It would rather have to be only a controlling corporation, which would not allow the rules of the Confederacy to be slackened as had happened with the former one.

'He spoke rather lightly of some necessary measure of force, and on my remarking how much mischief a conflict with weapons would cause, he admitted *that a struggle amongst Germans would be very deplorable, but said, that, in the end, such a struggle would within six weeks lead to the desired end.*

'Your Excellency will perceive from this, how things stand. Austria acts like a man of rank who tries, in a perilous position, to impose by means of former claims and customs,

and thus to tide over until better times have come. Yet the measure which is, in such a position, to be taken advantage of, has exceeded it. While they themselves solemnly have declared that they will not acknowledge a German legislature, to wish, at the same time to take part and force upon the great patriotic German State and her Confederate allies a supremacy of their own making, is a piece of arrogance which has no equal.

'What would those who bowed to her not have to undergo? And yet I fear that such will not entirely be wanting. I also think, that the hope alone of thus intimidating those whose courage is weak, is moving Austria to this course.

'They hope thereby to make the Confederate Union still smaller, whereas it is well known that they have not the strength to execute their threats, especially as the Russian Emperor, as I heard from a good source, is decided against any forcible solution of the conflict.

'Our Conference maintained a perfectly quiet character, through all the plain speaking of opposition. Finally, Liebe and I declared that we would report the difference which still stood in the way to our Governments, and await their decision; but that we must until then refuse to enter the Assembly.

'Count Thun regretted that we were still divided in an official sense, but expressed a wish that this should have no influence in our personal relations. He, for his part, would also make a report, but thought that we might with certainty say beforehand that his Government would not yield on the slightest point. We must now wait for what will be decided in Berlin, and what in Vienna. Until then, the point of view chosen with the allies jointly will be quietly adhered to.

'*Frankfort, June 6th*, 1850.'

For the criticism of the Austrian policy, as it appeared here in an unconcealed, massive form from the utterances of Count Frederick Thun, historiography needs only to add the fact, now become known, that this occurrence was 'too much' for even old prince Metternich. A third too much,' he

wrote to Count Prokesch, 'was the proscription of the votes put in at Frankfort. Such a declaration cannot be admitted by any participant—even if he is in the first rank—it can only become the product of a general decision.' *

It was not Prince Schwarzenburg's policy to place a check on himself on account of considerations of the kind. He approved, as Seebeck was able to announce on July 2nd, the declarations and attitude of Count Friedrich Thun in the fullest degree, and recommended him to continue energetically in the same path. In fact, he had the deplorable success of making the Grand-Ducal Hessian Government enter the so-called full Confederacy, and being represented by Herr von Dalwigk. The Elector of Hesse did not recoil from the faithless part of remaining behind in the Union, and at the same time working against the united decisions of the Congress of Princes by his entrance into the Confederate Assembly.

The Prussian Ministry continued meanwhile to play their patient part. The Frankfort Plenipotentiaries were instructed, in case no useful reply came from Vienna, to repeat in a joint note to the Unionist Plenipotentiaries the demand which had hitherto only been made confidentially, protesting against speaking out, and thereby giving rise to a counter note. By this means Austria's attitude, which had been hitherto only given by word of mouth, would be officially verified.

Added to this, the Plenipotentiaries of the Unionist Princes at Frankfort were condemned to perpetual waiting, which was correctly pointed out by Seebeck as entirely beneath their dignity.

There was no dearth of wars of despatches during the following months, and one may readily convince one's self from the collections of documents relating to the German question. There were no decisive moments whatever in the Ministerial skirmishes. Austria's old confederate allies in Frankfort took care that the secret wishes and hopes of the great Austrian programme did not become too luxurious, for Hanover Luxemburg, Strelitz and others declared in the sessions of the supposed Confederate full assembly with great candour, that

* From the Remission of Count Prokesch, II, 389.

they saw nothing restored besides the old Confederate assembly *in integrum*, and would hear nothing of Austria's entrance, with all her non-German lands into the Confederacy.

The King of Prussia indefatigably tried again and again to reach a point at which he could come to an understanding with Austria, and was each time forced to admit that he had been painfully deceived. Thus they gradually reached a condition of complete weariness, which the hot summer months appeared to throw over the whole German policy. Only at the end of July the Prussian Plenipotentiaries at Frankfort received their recall, after the Austrian Government had refused all Prussia's proposals to her conferences. In this humour the most patriotic men turned away from the great affair, and my brother remarked:

'If I have not written to you for a long time, and did not even thank you for your kind words on my birthday, it was because I no longer like to write to Germany. The conduct of the Governments is base beyond all comprehension, so that one is ashamed for them. The old Confederate Diet at Frankfort (!) and now madness at Cassel! It is too much, and that is why I turn from it with loathing.'

And again this warm German heart complains:

'I am as unhappy as you are over the state of German affairs. It is not possible to destroy a correct political idea more completely than they are striving to break up the closer Confederacy. Constant idleness, provisory government after provisory government, in order to *appear* united, whereas all those with whom it would be important to be united, know very well that there is no unity.'

Austria kept a sharp lookout on Prussia's weak attitude, and came forward with ever bolder undertakings. While her numerous partisans in Berlin knew how to represent to the King the terrors of his alliance with the men of revolutionary St Paul's Church and the Erfurt Parliament, her agents in Frankfort, as in the Middle States, were keeping untiringly to the work of preaching the necessary war to which Count Thun had looked forward as a short campaign of six weeks.

On the 2nd of September Prince Schwarzenburg had the

Closer Confederate Council opened in Frankfort, and put an end suddenly with this unheard of step to all the communications relating to the public law regarding the question of the real and the unreal full assembly. In doing this he also settled all doubts concerning the administrations of the property of the Confederacy and the right of execution of the actually existing Confederate Power.

In the Closer Council the seventeen votes, as is known, decided by means of a simple majority, and this was no longer wanting for the Austrian Confederate presidency.

It was now possible any day, that the execution might be decreed against the one or the other of the Unionist Princes. And, indeed, there was to be no want of opportunity to unfold the old Confederate flags, all eyes were kept fastened on the Electorate of Hesse, where such a man as Hassenpflug did not advise the Elector in vain. To him was assigned the task of beginning the conflict.

When, on the 4th of September, this Government of the Electorate of Hesse had decreed the open breach of the Constitution by means of settling the amount of taxation without the consent of the Houses, and the whole machine of State had lost its strength in consequence, the flying Elector sought protection with the Confederate Diet. The Closer Confederate Council protected him, without considering that Prussia's vote, as well as that of the Unionist States were not represented, and that the Elector himself must still actually count as a member of the Union.

This was the moment in which Frederick William, according to the universally spread opinion, again appeared to rise up in righteous indignation. He protested in the often printed note of September 23rd, and on the 26th appointed Radowitz Minister for Foreign Affairs. Nothing was more wrong, than when they presumed that these facts had put an end to the King's decided, or even war-like feeling. In spite of these steps, he believed very little in the realisation of Austria's threats, and in any warlike conflict whatever.

Since the Congress of Princes I had had much intercourse with the King, and he was so friendly as to give me an

opportunity of hunting in his preserves, as we still suffered in this respect in Thuringia in consequence of the year 1848.

It is certainly characteristic, that, on the 27th of September, the King, on the day of Radowitz's appointment, wrote me an unusally gay letter, in which he invited me, amongst other things, to Letzlingen to hunt, not omitting, in his witty way, to throw out side allusions to politics. I will only introduce a small portion of the King's amiable and humorous letter, which will be characteristic of the feeling of the day:

'*Sans-Souci, September 27th*, 1850.

'. . . . Just returned from Oranienburg, I find your only too pleasant letter. . . . Excepting the news of Artemis' anger, which, however, has not hit you so hard as it did the widow Niobe, I am perfectly delighted with your letter and too kind thanks. I have another similar preserve, which would feel highly honoured by your visit, it is that of Letzlingen. I am thinking of hunting there in October. . . .

'. . . . It would be a real pleasure to me if the nastiness of the Electorate of Hesse does not hinder us from devoting ourselves to the noble work of hunting in the Letzlingen forest, and does not force us to mount on horseback. . . .'

The King had no immediate thought of a serious complication of the 'nastiness of the Electorate of Hesse,' as is seen, and even the meeting of the Emperor of Austria with the Kings of Bavaria and Würtemberg on the 11th of October in Braganza was by no means regarded as a kind of war-like alliance against Prussia.

Matters had, in the real sense of the word, grown difficult for the King, through the fact that Bavaria led the Confederate execution in Hesse, and in this circumstance was perceived a really intentional challenge to the Prussian army.

I prognosticated the progress and development of the whole affair according to my immediate impression, and described it quite objectively in a letter to my brother. I still insist to-day that my representation of the conflict was the correct one, and therefore communicate it here. It will

in any case serve to explain the situation as it was on the 25th of October:

'I shall try to make a sketch of the present state of things, which will show you how strangely everything has turned around, and how fateful the present moment is.

'After Prussia had neglected to give the Union that place which belongs to her, and hindering us from completing the work begun, it was easy to understand that our antagonists would, in their turn, attempt to bring their plans into execution, which plans, much as Karl has tried to deny it, consist of restoring the state of things which existed before March, with, if possible, the complete setting aside of the constitutional principle and the erection of the Confederate House, in which Austria is to be still *more* the master than before.

'They negotiated for weeks in Frankfort, and tried with all possible enticements to complete the so-called Confederate Assembly. In spite of the most abominable intrigues, the work only went on very slowly, a revolution was certainly necessary, in order to gain Confederate allies by means of *faits accomplis*, under pretence of having to restore lawful order.

'Hesse was the country for this, at whose head stood an incapable Prince and a corrupt Minister. Everything was then done in order to bring this country into a state of wild uproar. But in spite of the fact that all the good, conservative, constitutional newspapers were confiscated and the democratic ones were supported by Government money, the pure mind of the poor, oppressed people gained the day; there was only a passive resistance.

'Another plan had now to be adopted. Whilst Austria was placing herself in Frankfort, as if her only desire was to arrange a Confederate revision for the benefit of Germany, and promised pleasant and attractive things to each State individually, this consulting Assembly all at once declared itself to be the real, competent Confederate Assembly, leaves Hesse to beg for Confederate help against her rebellious people, and decides by means of apparent votes that Bavaria shall give Confederate help, and Bavaria obeys this apparent

authority and really sends her troops to Hesse, to the indignation of all Germany.

'The whole of Bavaria is full of warlike excitement, and popular feeling, even if divided, is nevertheless highly unfavourable towards us.

'As Hesse has not withdrawn from the Union, and we cannot for a moment permit Bavaria, in the name of an unacknowledged Confederate authority, to take possession of a land belonging to us with weapons in her hands, Prussia drew up the three army corps, which, 100,000 strong, already surrounded Hesse.

'I took advantage of my passage through Munich to speak with Minister von der Pfordten. We sat together for four hours. I not only learned Austria's plan, but also undertook to further the Minister's request that Herr von Radowitz should be made to understand the impossibility of Bavaria's *now* being able to withdraw.

'I immediately performed my commission, and moreover furnished all possible details in Berlin concerning what I had learned. The Austrian plan simply is: To make Bavaria take the chestnuts out of the fire and thus bring about a collision with Berlin. In spite of all this, I nevertheless think that they first took counsel at Warsaw, and will not begin the giant struggle against Prussia, the Union and German freedom, without Russia's help. Everyone is full of warlike feeling, even with us, they are tired of the hesitation, irritation and abuse; it is the universal wish that the sword should decide.

'To this point have incapable Princes, unpractical professors, and an unripe body of swindlers brought Germany! Will you look on idly while we cut each other in pieces?

'I close my political picture.—Yours etc.

'*Coburg, October 25th*, 1850.'

In Bavaria they had finally accepted the famous proposal of the Confederate execution in but a very half-hearted manner, as I saw from the communication of von der Pfordten, as already mentioned, and when the Prussians had moved

nearer and nearer to the Hessian frontier, and really occupied Cassel, the most illustrious men in Munich, where they had an immediate and personal knowledge of the Prussian army, became somewhat anxious.

Herr von der Pfordten did not conceal from me, moreover, that it was painful to him to have to perform police service for so petty a cause as that of the Electorate of Hesse, and I only state this, so that it may henceforth be known, that Herr von der Pfordten personally condemned the breaking of the Constitution in Hesse in the angriest words. Personally! for naturally, in the real world of great politics, Herr von der Pfordten was already a perfect tool of Prince Schwarzenburg's, and his King had just ratified a kind of Rhine League position under Austria at Braganza.

I had thought to be able still to form some consoling hopes from the circumstance that the King could honourably avoid this, and wrote, as already remarked, to Herr von Radowitz to that effect. But now the remarkable case occurred, that they unsheathed the sword in Berlin; a thing which would have been very good, if it had been done seriously: but, only for the sake of appearances and without being certain of the firm decision of the King, the warlike attitude was of but doubtful value.

Herr von Radowitz answered me:

'Most Illustrious Duke,—Your Highness has shown me the honour of communicating to me in the highly gracious letter of the 22nd inst. the utterances which Minister von der Pfordten made on the occasion of Your Highness's passing through Munich, concerning the position of Bavaria towards Prussia in the question of the Electorate of Hesse, and have at the same time called my attention to the proposals of settlement which, according to the utterances of Herr von der Pfordten, the Bavarian Government will make here through the medium of their envoy.

'Your Highness knows too well how to value the incentives which lead Prussia in the path upon which she has entered, for me to take the liberty of going closer here into the refuta-

tion of the accusations brought by Herr von Pfordten against our policy.

'I therefore limit myself to the remark, that the proposals for a settlement made by the Bavarian Government, of which Herr von der Pfordten furnishes a prospect, have hitherto not been brought to our knowledge, that, however, as far as they concern us, they shall be most fully considered. Your Highness will be convinced beforehand, that, in order to avoid an unnatural conflict, we will gladly agree to an understanding, presupposing that we are not expected to make a contract at the expense of our duty and honour. Before we make such a sacrifice, we shall *not shrink from the uttermost*, and Your Highness's most gracious letter affords me the certainty that the sympathies of the noblest amongst the nation will then be with us.

'I remain with the greatest respect, Your Highness's most humble servant,

'v. Radowitz.

'*Berlin, Oct. 25th*, 1850.'

I must add another fact to this letter, which I immediately had established by a protocol at the time, and which certainly appeared calculated to arouse belief in the entire seriousness of the Prussian decisions. I had sent Herr v. Treskow, Prussian First Lieutenant in the 7th Cuirassier regiment, formerly my adjutant, with the Bavarian papers to Berlin, and he received the commission to explain to me the views of the Prussian Government concerning the matter of the Electorate of Hesse as follows: 'That the Prussian Government is firmly decided on not allowing troops belonging to the allied Governments in Frankfort to enter Hesse—even should a great war be caused thereby.' The Commander-in-Chief of the Prussian troops will receive the order: 'As soon as he learns that troops belonging to the allied Governments in Frankfort are entering Hesse, he is to march against them, and to force them to leave Hesse.' The immediate consequences would then be, that the Palatine and Franconia would be occupied by Prussian troops, and the Palatine by portions of the Baden

and Kreuznach corps, Franconia, on the other hand, by the Fulda corps.

Such decided declarations were not otherwise comprehensible to me, except from the fact that the state of things had grown serious, and I had to ask myself—and also wrote to my brother:

'What is now to become of us small and few ones who have remained faithful to the Union? Can we, if it comes to blows, remain neutral? or are we to take part in it?

'I for my own person, am decided, but I cannot act without the others, to whom we are closely united, and whose fate is ours. The times are again frightfully serious, and the issue on all hands very doubtful. If we come to blows, we must certainly have the people on our side if we do not come to blows and yield, we must make concessions to despotism, and how are we to answer for this to our people? and how are we to govern them further?'

It could not be imagined that it was made easy for the small Governments to decide at that moment. Apart from the fact that the Thuringian States fell immediately within range of the probable seat of war, and Coburg was at once to attack the Bavarians and the Austrian army which was steadily drawing nearer with 120,000 men, nothing was neglected in Vienna, in order to place iron pressure on the smaller sovereigns.

If amongst the latter, they paid me, as it appeared, particular attention, I might well ascribe this honour as being due more to my person, than to the contingent of troops from Coburg-Gotha. But it was highly characteristic, that, in order in every way to inspire me with terror during those days, they also set my Vienna kinsmen into motion. My Viennese uncle, Prince Ferdinand, whose business it was not exactly to write down utterances concerning high politics, with my cousin Karl, who made me repeated visits, drew up a voluminous letter to me, in which, amongst other things, he said that I ought to consider to what dangers I had exposed myself and the whole family. 'And notwithstanding this—'

wrote my cautious uncle further—'You have, with all your concessions to a party whose demands could never be satisfied, not been able to obtain the slightest thanks or consideration for your great sacrifices, and it would be the same with every fresh sacrifice.'

Then my uncle perorated against my intention to accept a military position in Prussia, which he considered 'incompatible and none the less very dangerous' for me. But nothing was more surprising to me, nor significant of the Austrian relations at that time, than my good uncle's following communication, which must have had a deep meaning:

'Without mentioning the unpleasant effect of your step on your entire family, I must still draw your attention to the fact that if you should really join the hostile undertakings against us here, it *might easily happen*, that, in the excited feeling against you, *they might confiscate your possessions and property here*, which would be highly unpleasant.

'Therefore, my dear friend, consider well and thoroughly beforehand, what the inevitable consequence of your steps might be for you and your whole house, and that it would be highly unfitting to sacrifice the independence of your successors, and would meet with certain opposition from the other members of your family. In my opinion, the really wanton bringing about of a war, and that between races allied by blood—and for what mistaken and selfish reasons—would be entirely unpardonable—yes, by God! an entirely unpardonable business, for which everyone who takes part in it must pay heavily. This view is not mine alone,—*but I share it with many others.*'

I refrain from communicating the further voluminous contents of the letter, in which, as is self-understood, the supposition availed, that everything must go down before the Austrian army which placed itself in its path.

It was not this latter fear which had weight in Berlin, and they knew perfectly well there that the Austrian masses, which had partly been quickly collected from the Hungarian soldiers of the revolution, were by no means so dangerous as

a victory over the Piedmontese army made them appear. That the King himself also judged these things more correctly and that his reflections and doubts were by no means of an exactly military nature, was shown by the letters which I received from him at the time.

He knew very well that he possessed an important and certain instrument in his army, especially in order to bring about favourable decisions in a popular war.

If, on the other hand, one considered his political reasoning at the moment when he appeared to be preparing for war, one might well entertain the greatest doubts whether he would ever seriously employ his brave army to fight for the cause of the Union. Even the King's next conclusions could but appear an unsolvable riddle, as I had received the following letter from him :

'*Sans-Souci, October* 30, 1850.

'My dearest Duke,—It makes me quite sad to have to announce to Your Highness that I have had to give up the Letzlingen hunting for the present. I have already written to the Brunswicker that I cannot go to him in the forest, because I must at any moment be ready to move into the field. The same unfortunately holds good with my forests! just in the same measure as for the Brunswicker's Harz forest. Austria rejects every explanation concerning the Hessian affair, which *I* have offered him with the fullest, most honest, most truly obliging heart. I have prayed and implored, have almost gone beyond the bounds of what was permissible, in order to move Austria to allow *all* German sovereigns to shake hands over the paramount Hessian and Holstein matters, and, on account of the great danger and still greater responsibility attendant on both affairs, to let the questions of the Union and the Confederate Diet rest on them. The Union respecting Hesse and Holstein was very easy, as soon as the pretension of the eleven Princes who were playing at a Confederate Diet ceased for only a moment. For all our interests are equal in this.

'But neither this request, nor the warning prospect of every

noble and real German, Princely and Christian heart, that the agreement concerning German things must, as if of itself, join itself to the sweet habit of concord, has had any influence whatever. They do not believe in my seriousness. I am, therefore, in the truest sense of the word, *forced* to make them feel it. Under these circumstances I am *glebae adscriptus*, and cannot go into the forest to the joyous chase. It really afflicts me more than I can say. The cause is *too* sad, and my hope of being able to entertain Your Highness there, was too good!! So let us wait for better times, confiding in God. If God gives them, and my "call" is then conveyed to Your Highness, you will no doubt follow the master of Letzlingen to the hunting place without making a wry face.—Your Highness's devoted Cousin and Friend,

'FREDERICK WILLIAM.'

'They do not believe in my seriousness!'—Would it have been possible for me to obtain an only too weighty impression on the King's decisions from the contents of this letter? May the reader's judgment therefore remain unuttered. But if it was, for a moment, the King's intention to make his strength felt, a great alteration had set in between the 30th of October and the 2nd of November.

The Warsaw Conferences had taken place, and they had their effect on the King and the Cabinet. That the Emperor Nicholas claimed the part of umpire in Warsaw between Austria and Prussia, was certainly not unknown to the King when he charged Count Brandenburg with the sorry mission. The fact, already shameful of itself, that the Czar again decided Germany's fate, could have been made worse by the particulars of the transactions, the reason for sending Count Brandenburg was traced out by the King, and the Minister must undoubtedly have been armed with certain instructions concerning the chief question.

The King, as well as the Prince of Prussia, had meantime raised, in letters which I shall immediately communicate, the decided complaint that it was the Ministry which had made

the concessions which were equally repugnant to both of the royal gentlemen.

As if in contradiction to the fact that public opinion in Germany, on the other hand, had fully exonerated Count Brandenburg with over-powering conviction, and wished to see all yielding attributed solely to the King! Count Brandenburg personally defended the honour of Prussia and his King against the Emperor of Russia at the sacrifice of his last strength, yet, as is known, he nevertheless succumbed to Prince von Schwarzenburg and the Emperor of Austria, who was present in person. Nicholas, they asserted in Germany, had found it unpardonable that Prussia appeared to turn away from the principles of the sacred alliance.

Count Brandenburg returned to Berlin ill, and his speedy death on the 6th of November, was regarded and bemoaned amongst the friends of the German cause, as the result of a broken heart.

In the Ministerial Conference, on the 2nd of November, it came to a break between the two parties. Herr von Radowitz demanded the mobilisation of the army, and remained in the minority with his proposal, upon which he resigned with Ladenberg, and was dismissed by the King. Manteuffel undertook the Foreign Office, and after Brandenburg's death, presided in the Council of Ministers.

Prussia had yielded in all essential points, when the mobilisation was nevertheless decided on.

The fatal course of the Prussian policy is universally known in its chief points. The knowledge is less certain with regard to the King himself and the individual events which are decisive of his share in Prussia's fall.

A great deal was said, at that time, about the letter which the King wrote immediately after von Radowitz's dismissal, and which really was calculated to produce the impression that the King would never make up his mind to deny his friend's principles, with which he had agreed, for those of the Minister he had just dismissed.

As I preserve amongst my documents a perfectly trust-

worthy copy of the memorable letter, I will not withhold it from my reader here:

'*Sans-Souci, November* 1850,
'*after* 6 *o'clock in the evening.*

'You have just passed through the door, my faithful and dearest friend, and I have already taken up my pen to call after you a word of mourning, fidelity and hope.

'God knows, I signed your dismission from the Foreign Office with a heavy heart. But I have had to do still more in faithful friendship. I praised you before my assembled Council for your desire to retire. That says everything, and points out my position more clearly than whole books could do. I thank you from the bottom of my heart for your administration of the office.

'*It was the model and clever administration of my thoughts and my will.* And both were strengthened and elevated by your will and thought, for we had the same. In spite of all tribulations, it was a beautiful time, a beautiful moment in my life, and I shall be thankful to the Lord whom we both confess and in whom we both hope, as long as I breathe.

'May God the Lord direct you, and mercifully bring our paths together again soon. May His peace protect, surround and make you happy until we meet again.

'This in farewell from your ever true Friend,

'F. W.'

The dreadful game to which the King as it were confessed in the foregoing words with a kind of honesty peculiar to him, was not only a passing feeling of sympathy for the departing Minister, he had rather therewith drawn up his own system for the hard weeks which were to follow until matters were fully decided.

Therefore, when I had received news of Radowitz's retirement, I still believed that the cause of the Union had been let fall definitely; and as I had not expected much else for a long time, I was not overmuch surprised: 'There is no longer a

Germany,' I wrote resignedly to my brother, 'and only a small, humble Prussia.' But how astonished I was when I arrived on Thursday, the 7th of November at Erfurt, whither General von Radowitz had withdrawn after his dispensation, and learned from him at the station that the whole situation had again altered. Herr von Radowitz told me what had occurred during the past few days, and assured me that the King had made up his mind not to yield further.

Meantime, the news of the mobilisation had arrived from Berlin, and I at once declared to the General that I would request the King to allow me to lead the corps of the Unionist States.

On the same day I wrote fully to my brother concerning the state of things from Gotha, whither I had returned:

'With the intention of journeying to Berlin, I tried to make it possible to speak to Herr von Radowitz, and learned that the King, on account of the increasing insurmountable conditions of the Vienna Cabinet, was no longer inclined to yield further. The army will be mobilised, the volunteers called in; and the Unionist Princes summoned to do the same. Within eight days we shall have 300,000 men under arms. National feeling will rise from gloominess to enthusiasm.

'I immediately returned by means of special trains, and found news here an hour ago, that the Austrians have surrounded Coburg with 120,000 men. They are stationed at Lichtenfels, Cronach, Tambach, in a word, only two hours from Coburg. Their entrance may be expected every day.*

'In two hours I shall be on the road again, in order to save everything from Coburg that is possible. Last night, near Hulda, the Bavarians attacked the Prussian outposts, but were forced back. Postal communication is stopped, and they are on the point of declaring that war has broken out. All the railways in Bavaria have been taken possession of to convey the Austrian troops. This is how the matter stands to-day at seven, how it will look to-morrow no one can fore-

* The published news, which afterwards announced this as a fact, and which my brother had also read, was, however, false; the Austrians had orders not to enter the Unionist States.

see. Each day alters the position of things. My news is all of an official nature: the newspapers know nothing. This is as far as my information extends. I hope I shall still find everything in order in Coburg; they are in great perplexity here, but glad to be able to strike a blow for the good cause. The Houses here will also gladly give all their money for the mobilisation. How good is the feeling that, with us, the cause of the Princes is also that of the people. Now farewell,' etc.

The war-like feeling lasted for a few days. I addressed myself to the King in a letter, in which I requested the command of the Unionist Contingent corps. I congratulated him on his newly found energy, and said: 'it is the last time that you can save Germany.' I also remarked that it should not be thought that the Unionist Princes who had fallen away would be in a position to mobilise against us.'

The King immediately answered in the following pleasing and hopeful lines:

'*Bellevue, November* 11*th*, 1850.

'My dearest Duke,—Your Highness's excellent letter of yesterday has been handed to me here, where I have come to work. I hasten to express my thanks to you for its contents.

'Your fresh hero's heart will find a worthy place with my fresh and thoroughly brave army. I shall immediately have a consultation held with my War Minister on the subject. I will say, preliminarily, only as my idea, that the leadership of the Unionist contingents, strengthened, wherever it is possible, by Prussian troops, seems to me to be the most suitable task for Your Highness. Moreover, I am full of sadness, care and trouble. The death of dear, splendid Brandenburg is not the only thing which is the cause of it. It is chiefly the inheritance which he has left us: Concessions.

The majority of my Ministry has decided *for the same.* Radowitz had already managed the Holstein matter to the satisfaction of Russia and Austria. In the Hessian affair I demand, according to the "new system" *only* guarantees in the form of a treaty for the full security of my three military

roads. If that is granted, it is peace without joy. Nothing is healthy in Prussia except the army and the country-people, but they *alone*. It is a spirit of the year '13, without any exaggeration. Even the *canaille* is carried away by it. Let us hope the best from God.

'Heartily recommending myself to you, I sign myself, dearest Duke, Your Highness's obedient, faithful friend and cousin,

'FREDERICK WILLIAM.'

The King was silent in his letter concerning the state of the Union, and, with regard to Hesse, he had already arrived at the point of the guaranteed military roads. That Herr von Prokesch had demanded the dissolution of the Union the day before, and threatened to leave, furnished the loudly announced commentary, during the next few days, to the King's words, 'Peace without joy.'

But even now the unfortunate oppositions and misunderstandings continued with undiminished strength. Whilst the newspapers announced that Herr von Radowitz had been summoned to Berlin, in order to enter the Ministry again, the King thought in some measure to quiet public opinion by suddenly turning to England. He arranged General von Radowitz's mission to the Queen's Court, and in Berlin they placed almost exaggerated hopes on Prince Albert. Herr von Radowitz informed me on November 15 of his journey, which he really began on the 18th, having sought support and recommendation in all directions.

Since the Warsaw Conferences, the state of things in England had, without doubt, grown more favourable for Germany. The coming forward of the Emperor Nicholas as umpire of Europe opened the eyes of English politicians, and, with their admitted want of knowledge of German affairs a prospect of Russian development of power showed itself, which appeared to inspire wholesome fright.

The agreement between France and Russia, which now met the English Cabinet in most affairs, called to mind the times of Tilsit, and the Russo-Napoleonic division of the

world. Under these circumstances, the Prussian Government thought it wrong to neglect to ask for some succour from my brother.

Much has become known concerning the course of General von Radowitz's mission from Bunsen's papers,* nevertheless the information regarding my brother's conduct during these sad November days is very incomplete.

I had given the General a letter, and my brother considered it more advisable at that moment not to give utterance to his views through direct means, but through me in Berlin. Albert thought it right to adopt some reserve with the Prussian statesmen, and Bunsen consequently made the remark that the Prince considered a Prusso-English Union entirely impossible. In reality, he only considered himself sure as regarded his own person, that his own political position and responsibility did not admit of his interfering directly.

He had a very decided opinion of the ways and means with which Prussia might at this moment win England's friendship, and willingly allow them to be conveyed to Berlin through me. Immediate intercourse with the Prussian sovereign he wished to avoid if possible, and the want of trust with which Berlin affairs had inspired the English Ministers gave him every reason for this.

Before General von Radowitz's mission, he had already communicated his opinion to me in the fullest manner, with the intention of having it reach the Prince of Prussia through me. He was convinced that, according to the principle that the brave deserve victory, Prussia could only expect sympathy in England if she acted openly and decidedly, but that an initiative step on the part of the English Government might be as little calculated on as an alliance.

'*Windsor Castle, November* 10, 1850.

'DEAR ERNEST,—I received yesterday your two letters of the 1st and 4th inst., which have perhaps meanwhile been detained in all sorts of ways.

* Bunsen's Life III, p. 158.

'You will already have gathered from my last letter that no difference of opinion exists between us. You rightly say: "*it is the struggle between despotism and constitutional freedom.*" May Prussia recognise this, and own it before the world. It is the struggle of Prussia, which took Pomerania from the Swedes, Silesia from the Austrians, and their best portion from the poor Saxons, which concluded the separate peace with the French Republic, helped to divide Poland, and once took Hanover as compensation, it is Prussia's struggle, I say, for aggrandisement, for more power or consideration, therefore all Europe is allied against it.

'The chief aptness of the adversaries consists in putting the question *thus*, Prussia's chief aptness, in having separated from the national, representative, constitutional *German* point of view in the transactions.

'If Prussia wishes to endure the struggle, which she can hardly avoid now, she must summon her Houses, appeal to the Parliaments of the other German countries, take Hesse's Parliament under her protection, and openly declare that it is a question of the preservation of the Constitutional principle. Then power will accrue to her, public opinion will silence Germany's enemies in England and France, and I am not doubtful of her success. In solely a Cabinet policy, even if ten armies stand behind it, Prussia must come out a loser, as has invariably been the case from 1848 until now.

'I do not like to write to the Prussian sovereigns at this critical moment, for the responsibility of giving advice from a distance is too great. But you can communicate the views which I have expressed here to the Prince, who has again proved himself to be a man of honour at this dark crisis,—Always your faithful brother,

'ALBERT.

'P.S.—I presume this letter will still find you in Berlin.'

*November 11th.*

'Yesterday being Sunday, my letter could not leave, since then I have received one from Karl, who tells me that you

have let him keep you from going to Berlin; I therefore send these lines to Gotha.

'I am sorry, that you did not allow your first pure impulse to prevail. I cannot agree with Karl's political arguments. They are never solid enough for me, and are perpetually involved and confused with a view to personal advantage.

'In great moments, like the present one, only feelings of honour and duty should speak, everything else lies in God's hand, who will not let the righteous perish.

'For heaven's sake do not follow the policy of half-measures and pretended carefulness, which Saxony has followed since the Reformation, or rather since the entrance into Government of the Albertinian line, and through which it has been ruined, but which it is still following to-day.

'What holds good with Prussia and constitutional freedom also holds good with the Unionist Princes; no Cabinet policy but fidelity to the Confederate allies and harmony with your own Parliament, your own people. You may show Karl this letter.'

In explanation of the wish last expressed with regard to Prince Leiningen, I must remark here, that he was extremely active at that time in the service of the Frankfort Governments, and was particularly striving in some degree to quench my brother's lively fire.

He was then with me at Gotha, and wrote in reply to Albert a letter which, it is true made but little impression as far as concerned the tendencies of my brother and myself, but contained so much that was important in the way of information concerning school affairs, that it will make the course of Berlin politics, which daily grew worse, more comprehensible here:

'*Gotha, November 19th*, 1850.

'DEAR ALBERT,—In the *Magic Flute* it says, "learn to discern deceit from truth." Now, it sounds somewhat paradoxical, it is true, that in order to follow this wise saying of Zoroaster's, I undertook a small excursion to Berlin, whence I am just returning *via* Dresden.

'But some few connections have remained to me from former times, through whom if it be only for my own satisfaction, I am trying to obtain a clue by means of which I may find my way out as well as I can from the labyrinth of the intricate ideas of lying and deceit. But the clue reaches only as far as the 17th, it would be frivolous to wish to assert anything beyond that; for the policy of the Prussian Cabinet can only be rendered perceptible to the senses by the motion of the pendulum: by this, I on no account mean the King; for I believe on the contrary that he most certainly knows what he wants, and the wavering really consists in yielding to a temporary pressure from outside, and then, when this is set aside, in the return to his will.

'What, for example, are his views concerning Constitutionalism, etc., better known to you than to me. The will of the King, based upon these views, has made itself felt in the same way, in all the various crises which we have gone through since the year 1848. The same will happen now. This fact has been as little taken into consideration during his time, as the circumstance that Austria will not now agree to such a formation of Germany, by which she will be condemned to a so-called further alliance.

'But I now appeal from your understanding, darkened by doctrinary and strange influences, to your clear and sharp intellect. Tell me, would not the fate of our poor Fatherland, which is now exposed to all the winds that blow, have been entirely different had all that great strength, which is gradually being wasted on things impossible of execution, been used for possible and palpable things,—a revision of the Confederate Law and the Confederate Diet? Tell me, whether Prussia, supported by the German party, standing on firm ground *in* the Confederacy, would not have forced back Austria step by step into proper bounds, whereas *outside* the Confederacy, suspended in the air, exactly the opposite has taken place? Tell me, whether Prussia, with the *German* interests represented by her, would not find herself in an entirely different position with regard to the Great Powers?

'What has been said here is no vain recrimination, it has

also its practical side for the events which are just preparing, for we see the same party, which has just suffered shipwreck with the Erfurt Union, which, careless of all experiences connected with democracy, is blowing the war trumpet with positively desperate rage!

'My last remains of confidence in the political fitness of our country-people dies away with it, for what madness it is to hope, that from a war which by means of bloodshed and devastated lands, kindles the hate of the individual races against one another in the most vehement manner, German unity will spring; the freedom of citizens from the victorious armies of absolute minded Princes; Germany's greatness and power from the unavoidable interference of foreign countries?

'The cause is now pitiable, for I perceive that a new Confederate Constitution will spring from the much lauded free conferences, which will be worse than even the old one was. Of the critical position in which the Unionist Princes have fallen I say nothing, as you will be sufficiently informed concerning it.

'Now farewell for to-day, dear friend, place me at the feet of Victoria,—Your faithful cousin and brother-in-law,

'KARL.'

It could not fail to be agreeable to me that Leiningen had made two points tell in his letter, which might aid in the comprehension of the real condition of things in London.

The trustworthiness of Prussian aims and the dangerous position in which the Confederate Princes had fallen through their fidelity to Prussia. As regarded the question itself individually, there was just at this time a sufficiently plain perception of what was the question in Germany in the truest sense.

The matter of the Electorate of Hesse, for the first time amidst the German confusion, offered something practically comprehensible to the English mind. A flagrant breach of the constitution, a despotic intervention, a suppression of national rights, all these were things which might have met with quick comprehension in England. In these questions—thus even the

most conservative circles in that free country asserted—it was to be shown clearly what Prussia wished and might mean in Germany. If she wished to act in the spirit of constitutional progress, and not simply continue the hated policy of the old German Confederacy, she could only come forward as the protector of provincial law. Should she show herself weak and useless here, it would be foolish on the part of the English Government to expect that they would allow themselves to be deceived by the mission of a Prussian Minister who had just been dismissed from service. My brother answered in this strain:

'I have received your letter through General von Radowitz, and the subsequent one of the 19th.

'Radowitz pleased me, and as he had permission to inform me freely and unconstrainedly of the whole secret history of Prussia from 1848 until now, his communications were of great value to me. Meanwhile, I can add nothing to my earlier letters. It is really only necessary for Prussia to make herself the *honourable, honest,* enthusiastic bearer of constitutional freedom in Germany, in order to stand in unconquerable strength; if she will only be Prussia, longs for the holy alliance again, places no confidence in the constitutional system, will defend the military roads in Hesse only, she will become what she was, in spite of her enormous preparations Austria's and Russia's most humble servant, with the difference added, that she will then be despised by them.

'The Manteuffel tactics are horrible, his notes lamentable; those to the Unionist Princes contemptible.

'I do not know what the latter will have decided, and would also refrain from giving advice at such a distance; but I do know, that if I had to act for them, I would maintain the Union, in spite of Prussia's falling off, that I would not of my own free will release her from her duty, and should protest against the agreements in Warsaw, where they were not represented.

'Count Brandenburg could in no case serve up to the two Emperors the Union and her Constitution for dinner. Prussia, King, Parliament, and army could obtain a last hold on it, in

order to swing themselves to a better piece of ground, the small States (which are so often despised by the *German* party), would again prove that the German cause has its chief support in them. Now farewell, your etc.

'*Windsor Castle December* 1*st*, 1850.'

What had meantime been actually accomplished was in everything exactly the opposite of what my brother had in the above lines pointed out as Prussia's task, and exceeded even his worst fears. The dissolution of the Union which was already known to him was particularly shameful from the fact that Herr von Bülow had to make known to the College of Princes in the name of the Prussian Government that Prussia's retirement from the Constitution of May 26, 1849, had taken place at the desire and demand of Austria. The inquiry made of the Unionist Government, whether they would still cling to the Confederacy, sounded under these circumstances like derision of the small, powerless States, unless it might mean: 'Break up of yourselves, so that I may transfer the guilt from my shoulders to yours.'

Should the small States which are faithful to the Union not fall a prey to the Confederate projects of Austria and the Middle States, amidst the crashing of weapons, the time had come when they had to think of guarantees for their own existence.

They had reached the limit of confidence with regard to leading Prussia, and even the personal connecting points proved themselves to the King to be nerveless at this sad time.

The most singular thing about this was the circumstance that Frederick William referred to his Constitutional duties, and fortified himself with regard to his family, the Unionist Princes and the country, against the responsibility of his Ministry, as if he had all his life been the most unconditional advocate of the strictest parliamentary system.

The Prince of Prussia replied thus to the communications which I had made him at my brother's request, from Berlin, on the 22nd of November, 1850:

'Excuse my drawing you a picture of the feelings which have shaken me during the past while. The King has been ignominiously left in the lurch by his Ministry, so that he saw himself forced to make use of his constitutional right, to allow his responsible Ministry—to withdraw from him entirely.

'Not four whole days were necessary to convince these gentlemen that they had taken a mistaken path, but too late, Count Brandenburg's concessions—peace be to his ashes—were made!

'One consequence of this is the question amongst the Unionist Governments, whether they will give up the Unionist Constitution of May 26th, 1849. It is self-understood, that only the renunciation of this Constitution is meant, whereas whether the *principle of this* Constitution can be maintained is another, and this can only be set up after the verdict of the Council of Princes, and after the establishment of the Constitution of the wider Confederacy.

'If, therefore, the fact of this roundabout inquiry touches one very unpleasantly, there is nothing justifiable in the matter, as the union of the Parliamentary form is assured.

'For this very reason, however, I have an idea that Austria, when she has obtained this fresh concession, will proceed to make new demands, in order to make what she has obtained illusory.

'It is my opinion that our patience should long ago have been exhausted. Your view, and that of your illustrious brother, are certainly very correct, although only the attainable should always be striven for, and one should not cling to the ideal. In a short while we shall be prepared for war, then we can speak more decidedly. The speech from the throne has made an excellent impression on the Houses. Their decisions must now be expected; they will, I hope, be patriotic, but they must not grow too provoking towards Austria, so that no cause may be given them to pass our frontiers, before we are fully prepared, etc. etc.'

During these days of an unexpected crisis I had taken myself to Berlin, in order to see how far the thunderstorm

would burst on the small exposed States. It was of the greatest importance that I should remind the King by my personal presence of the promises which he had made to the Princes who were faithful to the Union at the Congress and on every other occasion.

The division of the small Unionist countries with the object of arriving at a better understanding with the Middle States might now be accepted as possible, at least in the sense of the Bavarian Confederate project. But I wished to have my say in this matter. Besides, I had, in the improbable case of a war arising from Austria's increasing desire to humble Prussia, the intention of coming to a conclusion concerning the military position promised me.

When I arrived at Berlin on the 23rd of November, I found that the confusion which reigned in all circles had reached a climax which has hardly ever been drastically enough described by the pen of any historian, and I must, in order to help my own memory, look up the reports which I wrote at the time, believing they will give a truthful picture of those fatal November days:

'*Berlin, November 26th*, 1850.

'I have now been here for three days, in order to assist in the abominable confusion which prevails amongst the Ministry, the public and the Court. Without principle, without a clear consciousness of what they wish and ought to do, and without firmness, without adhering to either the one or the other decision for the space of over twelve hours, with a divided Ministry, Prussian policy is groping about blindly: The crisis has reached its highest point, the die will be cast to-morrow, or the day after at the latest. It is a question of whether Germany and Prussia are still to live, or whether they are to fall into the hands of the Austrian potentates for ever.

'They will now, if they still wish to come to blows, fight for illusions, for the *casus belli* is wanting, as they have yielded in all chief points, but the feeling of disgrace is urging

them on to war, because they are already completely burdened with it.

'Enthusiasm for the war—the most fatal one which has ever been fought—is the unanimous expression of the people. They make sacrifices which would be incredible, were they not proved true. My heart bleeds when I look on at this state of things, as it may immediately change to anarchy; but, on the other hand, one might weep for joy when one sees the strength and will of this nation. I wish I could transport you here by magic, to see the play which is now before my eyes.

'It only needs a man of strength and will to obtain the most incredible success. You will ask me what I am doing here? My answer is: I am here to keep the small States guaranteed against what may happen, if we are still to go with Prussia. I may be satisfied to-morrow by some convincing disclosure.

'I have always had a great deal of influence here, and now I am making use of it to save at least the best from the shipwreck, our honour first of all. I am besieged all day long by the members of parliament, whom I know since the Erfurt and Frankfort days. People like Simson, Beseler, etc., patriots from the army and the people flock around me. I appease and quench their passions on the one hand, and try, on the other, to acquaint the King, whom I see daily and with whom I hold long conversations, with the real situation, as he is always dreaming and demands the impossible, without firmly desiring it. He is frightfully excited. As is always the case, contrasts are fighting against each other here: The cry here is, war at any price, and there, peace at any price, the King follows the one to-day and the other to-morrow. The few to whom I belong find it a difficult position. They wish to keep in the middle of the road, and are quite *quiet*, as nothing is to be obtained in the hour of danger from passion, and equally little from cowardice. This position is a horrible one, because everything has already been bungled.

'I now have an insight into the confused mass of notes, and am indignant at the manner in which they operated here. I was also drawn into the secret of Radowitz's mission.

'It would be of no use if they had gone the right way. They show their weaknesses to the Austrians here, in order to move them to yield from *pity* owing to the bad position into which they brought themselves.

'The result of such nonsense is plain, all the more so when one knows Austria.

'But it is impossible to foretell with approximate certainty; so near as the solution is, it might fall through. You also will be able to imagine it when you look at my picture. The confusion in Frankfort in 1849 was immense, the fate of poor Germany will now, in 1850, be urged on to a decision through still greater confusion in Berlin. Both times the people were aroused, then for the idea of its sovereignty, to-day for the strength of its weapons. If they only understood how to direct such excitement and turn it to good!

'I close in a troubled and annihilated frame of mind, and with little hope of a better future, but quietly and firmly decided upon going in the way pointed out. Your, etc.

'ERNEST.'

I must add to the foregoing description the express remark that much of it was communicated by me in speech, word by word, from the utterances of the King. Thus I clearly remember a conversation with him, in which he placed certain hopes on the sympathy which it was his conviction the Court at Vienna must feel for the difficulties of his position.

The diplomatists, it is true, gave no sign of considerations of the kind. On the 24th of November Herr von Prokesch had handed in a note, in which the guarantees demanded of Prussia with regard to his military roads in the Electorate of Hesse were, indeed, warranted, but it was at the same time demanded that the Prussian troops should evacuate Cassel within twenty-four hours. As Prussia had taken no part

in the Confederate Diet's decision to make an execution, the occupation of the Electorate by Prussian troops could not be allowed, even in the form of a co-operation.

The 25th of November was one of the most decisive days. It was a Monday, and everybody knew that the Council of Ministers had been assembled by the King at Bellevue at noon. In the afternoon I found the King in company with most of the Princes, who were holding a lively discussion as to the eventuality of war.

The King was uncommonly friendly to me, and assured me that he had agreed with the War Minister that I was to receive the chief command of the corps, which would be formed of Unionist contingents and some divisions of the Prussian army, as he had written to me before was his intention. This and many other remarks of the King's inspired me with the supposition that the decisions of the Council of Ministers must have been of a warlike nature. Rumours of this kind were also spread in Berlin, and in the evening they spoke everywhere with loud pleasure of Manteuffel's retirement and a Bodelschwingh-Radowitz Ministry.

I could not, indeed, place any belief in this news. Meanwhile, it could not be denied that Prussia's position had become a purely defensive one through the awkward and violent form of the Austrian ultimatim, which demanded the evacuation of the Electorate of Hesse within a short space of time. Under these circumstances, it would not have been incredible that the King really had seriously believed in the war on that Monday afternoon. Nevertheless, if he was for a moment decided to yield no further, the political direction of the wind was already entirely changed on the following day.

As early as that morning, the Belgian envoy Nothomb, who always faithfully furnished me with news, from personal inclination, and at his King's order, brought me the certainty that Prussia wished to fulfil the last demands also of Austria. He had information direct from the Manteuffel Cabinet, that it was only a question of a form which they hoped to find by means of some kind of Conference.

Immediately after this I met the Lord Chamberlain von Redern, who was, it is true, on quite another side, politically, but who had always shown himself to be well meaning towards me. He thought it right to assure me that the dispute had been properly settled.

He wished to have warned me of false steps which might compromise me too greatly on the Austrian side.

Discouragement, disquiet, curiosity decided me to put an end to my present position. I repaired to the King and asked for a farewell audience, assuring him that I was forced to leave more quickly on account of home affairs, in order to complete the military preparations at the right time. With regard to this departure, I thought I might hope that the King would feel himself urged before I left to make a more positive declaration. But I was mistaken, for I was probably intentionally never to learn from his lips what he now considered himself forced to do. I was invited to the family dinner; the desired audience was to be accorded me afterwards, and then I was to join the Queen at tea.

During dinner the King expanded in a humorous description of an inspection, shortly before undertaken by himself in person, of the tents and waggons, which he would take to head-quarters during the coming campaign. No one heard of all the warlike preparations with greater astonishment than the Queen, who appeared to be somewhat incredulous regarding the King's remarks, and assured us that she thought of anything rather than of war.

She turned opportunely to me, and said that she had only that day received news from her sister at Vienna, who had led her to hope for the best.

The Ministers may have reasons for quarrelling amongst each other; between the two families, she could at least assure me, that the friendly relations had not been clouded for a single hour. After dinner was over, I followed the King into his working room, to take leave officially. He must have felt that I was justified in expecting a decided declaration concerning peace or war, for he at once began to talk to me in a kind of monologue in which he recapitulated his conception of

the entire policy of the Union, and gave vent to the most singular protestations of his unaltered mind. I had neither an opportunity of speaking nor of taking my leave, before an aide-de-camp of the King of Hanover was announced, who had been summoned to an audience at this very hour.

This remarkable accident did not appear to suit the King very well, and as I made a motion to go, the King, noticing my stupefaction, remained silent a moment, bade me stay, and gave orders for the aide-de-camp to be admitted at once Turning to me, he emphasised the words: 'There is to be no mistrust, listen, and tell the Princes how faithfully I stand by the cause.'

It was not known to me on what mission the Hanoverian officer had come, and had been now sent for by the King. The talk was of despatches which were to be delivered to the adjutant; as for that, I had a feeling of deep pity for the Hanoverian envoy, when I reflected that he would have to report to his royal master what the King said to him. It was impossible to form a picture of the situation from his words.

Meantime, the adjutant was dismissed, and soon after that I took my leave with the consciousness of not being any wiser than I had been in the morning.

A few hours later, at the Queen's tea table, the situation at length became comprehensible to me. Amongst others, I found Major von Manteuffel and General von Gerlach present.

The noble lady of the house appeared to be in very animated spirits, and was particularly gracious to me that evening. The talk soon turned on the political situation at that moment, and the Queen triumphantly related that they had succeeded in putting aside all difficulties, and that the Ministers of Austria and Prussia would already meet at Olmütz the next day, or the next but one, in order to smoothe over the misunderstandings which still existed.

The conversation which was carried on about this news in the Queen's circle was kept up with an amount of quietness and freedom as if it were a matter which might naturally have been expected for some time. When the King entered later on, the conversation assumed a most harmless character, and

the most indifferent things were talked about, as if in a time of the greatest peace. It was in this remarkable manner that I at first became acquainted with the importance of Olmütz in the development of Germany.

I had the pleasure of receiving from the King at my departure a commission to seek out and speak with Minister von Manteuffel before his departure for Olmütz. My parley with him was as short as it remained clearly imprinted on my memory.

I took advantage of the Minister's embarrassment at seeing me, to put the categorical question whether it was correct about Olmütz, and when he answered unconditionally in the affirmative, I merely asked to be allowed to go home as quickly as possible in order to convey the news to the poor militiamen who had had to separate from their families during the severe winter. I found them in sufficient numbers at all the stations, when starting on my home journey immediately afterwards.

Thus ended the remarkable days during which the Union was buried!

In the frightful excitement which swept over Germany, the most wonderful stories were spread concerning the progress of the event.

In reality, the unhappy King, who held Germany's fate in his hand, and had certainly not wavered for a moment in the feelings which he entertained for it, had not supposed that every good German would in after days still utter the name of Olmütz with pain and horror.

He was rather of the opinion that the friendship of the family had brought it to pass as a fortunate concession, that the Ministers were forced to the Olmütz negotiations; he wished to think that a certain advantage had rather been gained thereby.

This appears to me to be the moment in which to collect the impressions which the King produced both politically and personally during long intercourse.

There is no lack of numerous and excellent persons who knew him, and who would at the same time have had the

greatest qualifications for artistically depicting his character; he had so much intercourse with learned men, authors, artists; in his relations with diplomatists and statesmen there lay so much freedom and openness, that one must wonder at meeting with almost no faithful description whatever of King Frederick William. A great number of his speeches have been collected and circulated, and letters written during the most important years of his life have been published, letters which he had with quick hand addressed to various party representatives in different directions, in an always equally amiable and spirited manner. If one were capable of examining these notes of the King, and could make a portrait from them for posterity, he would nevertheless make the fatal mistake of thinking that it would be sufficient for the understanding of mankind to unite the King's activity of thought and his intellectual life, in a picture. Whoever had practical relations with the King, whoever observed him in business, whoever was placed in a position by his rank and office, to see him as it were in everyday clothes, soon received the impression that the greatest contrasts reigned within him as between the world of ideas and that of deeds. His utterances to men such as Bunsen, Ranke, Ritter, Humboldt had to be understood in a particular manner, and his letters to the Gagerns, Dahlmanns, Arndts and many others should not be brought under the head of political occupation.

But one may nevertheless suppose that the most prominent man of all these circles fully saw through the King's twofold nature, it is even known that Humboldt not seldom grew bitter when he came to speak of the contrasts in the King's character. Discussion with the leaders of science and politics was an intellectual necessity to Frederick William IV, and an academical play, in which it by no means mattered to him whether it accorded with what occurred in his Cabinet and his State, or whether it was the true expression of what he himself thought, wished or intended. He strove to please and to be recognised, as it were, officially, and was at the same time high-minded and noble enough to make his kingly

consciousness of power hardly perceptible to inferior persons in the inexhaustible utterance of religious, scientific and political problems.

His chief strength consisted in quickly grasping any situation whatever, in often putting it together correctly and more often in a striking manner, and in forming it into a picture of the most beautiful colours. When this was done, he dropped the position with regard to it of a painter whose only care is to put his conception on canvas and obtain the most telling effects. To-day he would paint holy virgins and to-morrow devils, with equal perfection of skill; and as it was of no importance in an artistic sense for the sentiment always to agree with the object, the possessor of each individual painting was involuntarily and unintentionally deceived in the real character of the artist.

Although the King possessed little of what is, in the strictest sense of the word, usually called learning he had an extraordinary amount of knowledge, acquired by means of a memory which seldom failed him. He embraced the most widely separated departments in his rich fancy, and always knew how to obtain full value from the display of his acquirements. He was better versed in history than any one in a similar position, or than one might be justified in expecting from a layman.

He was an extraordinary art connoisseur, and possessed a refined taste.

If he made less practical use of these qualities than might have been expected when he was Crown Prince, the cause of this might be found in his oft'-changed feeling towards persons and things.

In military matters, also, he possessed what is usually less acknowledged, much more knowledge and judgment than was supposed. His criticisms after the great manœuvres were highly striking and instructive to the leaders. It was therefore not correct, when they tried to explain his love of peace which very nearly touched Prussia's military honour, as being a want of professional understanding of the excellent Prussian army.

At many moments the King appeared almost childishly good-natured, but he could be very hard and inconsiderate during the later years of his life. He showed the most lively solicitude in small things, one might say, even a certain sentimentality, but he could transform sacred feelings and recollections into nothing immediately afterwards.

Although he was filled with the strongest feeling of consciousness, as a ruler it must nevertheless be admitted that he showed himself greatly inclined to Liberal views and feelings.

It appeared less comprehensible to him, however, that published convictions and spoken words generally have far-spreading consequences for Princes, for he was unfortunately only too deficient in energy and unpliable will. His opinion was seldom uttered in a way which excluded its being misunderstood by others.

Orders and counter orders alternated frequently in his decisions, and, to his torture, he was aware of this want of certainty and firmness; he tried as it were to dull and deceive himself regarding this by means of reasoning and arguments. He reached a certain virtuoso-ship in this, so that he finally believed his strongest fictions without a question. Only a deep longing for inward peace with God could preserve in this passionately moving soul any religious resting-place.

He spoke preferably and more frequently of friendship, fidelity and gratitude than business and state life as a rule allow, and he probably thus excited more doubts as to his honesty than may have been deserved. I often had an opportunity of looking upon all these opposites in the character of the King as a psychological enigma, and needed all the more time to solve it, as I was less enchained by the extraordinarily fascinating side of his nature than many of his most unconditional panegyrists.

Many of these incomprehensibilities might meanwhile be traced back to his purely physical nature. His voice was high-pitched, his stomach swollen, his movements hasty and uncertain. He suffered from violent excitements, and could not control his anger. During the better years of his life he

used to joke away his ill-humour each time in biting and sarcastic remarks.

Later on, a quick reaction of weekness and apathy succeeded each storm. Then he would succumb bodily, draw his hand across his forehead wet with perspiration, and his countenance assumed an expression of deep despondency.

It should really not be thought, meanwhile, that the recognition of the King's unfavourable qualities for a ruler and a politician could ever suppress my sympathy and devotion to him. As I was grateful to him for much, I exerted myself always to maintain the bonds which held me to him personally and politically, and I may perhaps mention that the Queen, after the poor man was freed from the suffering of living, said to me in a moment of unpretended feeling, the following words, which moved and pleased me deeply: 'You, my good Duke, were one of those whom he really prized and loved.'

In spite of all personal relations, no one, meanwhile, who had to sum up the reign of Frederick William IV, could say otherwise than that the King had perhaps irretrievably injured the intellectual and political restoration of Germany for many years and in many respects.

The most humiliating circumstance for our whole national resuscitation proceeded from the fact that the transactions at Olmütz took place under Russian intervention. When Prince Schwarzenburg appeared at the Conferences accompanied by the Russian Ambassador Herr von Meyendorf, it was as it were proved that the Emperor Nicholas was the real ruler on the Continent.

They could not say enough officially of the peaceable and friendly feeling which had been mutually shown, nor boast sufficiently of the zealous and loyal efforts of Herr von Meyendorf to render the understanding between the two parties easier. But Nesselrode's threatening note to the Prussian Cabinet before the Conferences had nevertheless to be admitted, and they told of a personal letter from the Czar to his brother-in-law, which had decided the catastrophe. One almost wished that these Russo-Prussian correspondences of those years might remain for ever kept from the world. It

was certain to all the initiated that the Russians had not only mediated, but dictated the peace in the truest sense of the word.

In the stipulations of Olmütz Prussia fell a complete prey to the affairs of the Electorate of Hesse and Holstein. She thought to have carried off only one success in the German question, because the invitations to the Ministerial Conferences in Dresden were to proceed under the formal equality of both Powers.

When I received news that the German Powers were summoned to the new task of Sisyphus in Dresden, I immediately sought to bring eighteen Princes of the existing Union to decide on acting co-operatively in all things, and to appear united at the Dresden Conferences according to previous understanding.

The latter were to begin on the 15th of December.

In order to cloak the defeat which she had suffered, Prussia appeared to continue the preparations for war, whilst the cruelly deceived and injured German people were told that both Great Powers would have won a victory, and that the victory of peace. The Houses at Berlin were adjourned by Herr von Manteuffel, in order to avoid unpleasant questions. The Christmas rejoicings were only to be spoilt for the militia, who lay with piled arms in the poor winter quarters, so that the Ministers might have the appearance of being deeply serious. So many lamentations and indignant words were confided to discreet papers during these December days, that it would be easy to publish a whole collection of them.

I may end the history of suffering of the year 1850 only with a letter from King Leopold, in order not to let pessimism have the last word here also. He had explained to me at the beginning of the New Year, with the superiority of a worldly-wise man, what a blessing kind peace was to Princes and people under all circumstances:

'My dear Ernest,—It is a long time, it seems to me, since I heard anything of you, and we are in the new year.

'Much has happened again, and although I do not belong

to the Peace Congress, and am not allied with Elihu Barrett, who, with Cobden, is of the opinion that the war should only be carried on in order to force people to keep the peace, I nevertheless thank Heaven that it did not come to war. Universal injury would certainly have arisen from it; the elements of order and the strength of the Governments would have been used for mutual disturbance, *un bénéfice ambitieux des anarchistes*, who thought to obtain advantages. This bull-fight would have been witnessed in France with universal pleasure, in the sweet hope of laying hold of a good piece of the old frontiers by this means.

'This latter consideration would not have been exactly pleasing to us. If one could only see something practically good come of the Dresden Conferences. This would really be in the interest of all German States, and ditto of the next-door neighbours. . . .

'LEOPOLD.'

My uncle could still hope for something to come of the Dresden Conferences!

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